
THE RISE AND EXPANSION
OF THE
BRITISH DOMINION
IN INDIA

BY SIR ALFRED LYALL
P C, K C B, D C L

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STRE
1914

'*L'Angleterre, cette puissance diffuse*'

HENRI MARTIN

(Histoire de France)

PREFACE (1907)

THE principal object of this book has been to sketch in outline the Rise of the British Dominion in India, and to relate the circumstances that led to the gradual extension of our territorial possessions up to 1858, when the Crown superseded the East India Company in the direct government of the country. It has also been thought expedient to give, toward the end of the volume, a short dissertation upon the nature and operation of the system of Protectorates, by which the independent native States within India have been preserved under the superior control of the imperial government, and the foreign States or outlying tracts adjacent to the British frontiers have been brought under our political influence But since the main purpose of the work is to present a connected view of the historical events and transactions, in Europe and in Asia, that combined to promote the foundation and to expedite the spread of the Dominion, the later stages of its expansion have been traversed in this narrative more rapidly than the earlier stages, which have perhaps attracted less general attention, and are not so commonly understood Moreover, several remarkable incidents (as, for example, the famous trial of Nuncomar) have been omitted or barely mentioned, because they

seemed to have little bearing upon the larger political issues with which this book is concerned; and also because a detailed account of them can be found in any history of British India.

In a supplementary chapter, now added, the course of Indian affairs, external and internal, from the date when the whole government was assumed by the Crown up to the present time, has been briefly surveyed. The character and important consequences of the foreign policy adopted by the British government during this period has been explained; and some attempt has been made to review the constitutional changes and legislative measures that have been introduced in the last fifty years for the improvement of our interior administration, and for the welfare of our fellow-subjects in India.

In the fifth edition now (1910) issued, some further additions have been made to certain parts of the text.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I.

EARLY COMPETITION FOR INDIAN COMMERCE.

DATE		PAGE
	Introductory remarks	1-5
From 300 B C to beginning of 16th cent. A D	Course of sea borne Trade by Red Sea and Alexandria	6
About 9th & 10th cents	Constantinople chief emporium of Eastern Trade	7
11th to 16th cents	Venice and Genoa, Commercial predominance . .	8
1492	Discovery of America . . .	8
From 1497	Route by Cape of Good Hope to India . .	8
16th cent	Commercial ascendancy of Portugal	10
1600	First Charter of English East India Company	12
1602	Dutch East India Company founded . .	14
17th cent.	Commercial ascendancy of Holland	15
1615-50	Decline of Spanish and Portuguese power	16
1614-18	Sir Thomas Roe's Embassy to Great Moghul	21
1623	Amboyna Massacre	23

DATE		PAGE
1638	Surat chief establishment of the English .	24
1651–54	First War between England and Holland .	29
1660	Aurangzeb's rulership begins . . .	29
1661	Cession of Bombay by Portugal .	30

CHAPTER II

INFLUENCE AND CONNEXION OF POLITICS IN EUROPE AND ASIA.

1664	Establishment of French East India Company .	3
1665	Second War with Holland	3
1667	Treaty of Breda, adjusting commercial disputes in Asia	36
1668	Pondicherry	
1672	Third War with Holland . .	36
	French Squadron on the Indian Coast	3
1685	English Company established at Bombay .	3
1686	English Company established at Calcutta	3
1687	Assumption by Company of independent jurisdiction .	3
1660–80	Rise of the Maratha power under Sivaji .	39
1690–97	Wars in Europe with France	4
1697	Peace of Ryswick	4

CHAPTER III

CONSOLIDATION OF ENGLISH EAST INDIA COMPANY.

1687–89	English Company's War against Aurangzeb	49
1698	Rivalry of new and old East India Company in London	57
1702	Union of both Companies .	57
1702–13	War with France	57

CHAPTER IV.

E FRENCH AND ENGLISH EAST INDIA COMPANIES

ATE		PAGE
1707	Death of Emperor Aurangzeb . .	62
07-50	Rapid decline of Moghul Empire . . .	63
39-40	Nadir Shah's Invasion of India . .	64
48-51	Ahmed Shah Abdallee seizes Punjab .	64
30-42	French colonizing Companies under Richelieu	66
1664-74	Colbert's East and West India Companies	70-72
1674	Louis XIV declares war against Holland	72
	Pondicherry founded by F Martin	74
3-4.	Interval of Peace between France and England . .	73
1715	French occupy Mauritius . . .	74
1719	New French East India Company . .	73
1725	Ostend Company suppressed .	73
1728	Danish Company extinguished	73
15-45	Growth of French East India Company .	74
1-54	Dupleix Governor of Pondicherry	79
1744	War declared in Europe with France	80
1745	Condition of French and English Companies	77

CHAPTER V

THE FRENCH IN INDIA UNDER DUPLEIX

6-49	War between French and English on Coromandel Coast .	82
1746	Madras surrendered to Labourdonnais	82
	Dupleix violates terms of surrender	83
	Dupleix defeats Nawab of Carnatic	83
	French attack Fort St David	83
1748	Pondicherry besieged by the English	84
1748-49	Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, and restoration of Madras . .	84

DATE		
1746-49	Growth of financial embarrassments of French East India Company	
1748	Death of the first Nizám of the Dekhan	
1749-54	War of Succession in the Carnatic	
1750-54	War between French and English Companies	
1751	Clive's defence of Arcot	
	Bussy established at Hyderabad	
1753	French retire from siege of Trichinopoly	
1754	Recall of Dupleix, and Peace between the Companies	

CHAPTER VI.

SECOND FRENCH WAR IN INDIA.

1756	Rupture between France and England	1
1758	Lally's Expedition reached India	1
	Lally takes Fort St David	1
	French expelled from Northern Sirkars	1
	Lally attacks Tanjore unsuccessfully	1
1758-59	Lally besieges Madras	1
1759	Siege of Madras raised	1
1760	Lally's defeat at Vandewash	1
1761	Pondicherry surrendered to the English	1
1763	Pondicherry restored to France	1
	Peace of Paris, terminating French rivalry in India	1
1781-82	Final expedition of French against English in India	

CHAPTER VII.

THE CONQUEST OF BENGAL.

1742	Aliverdi Khan Nawáb of Bengal	
1756	Succeeded by Suráj-ud-daulah	
June 1756	Taking of Calcutta by Nawáb of Bengal	
Jan. 1757	Clive recovers Calcutta	
June 1757	Battle of Plassey	

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SITUATION IN BENGAL.

DATE		PAGE
1757-60	English occupation of Bengal .	138-44
1759	Defeat of the Dutch in Bengal . .	144
1760	Clive returns to England . . .	144
1760-65	Period of misrule in Bengal	144-47
1763	Massacre of English prisoners at Patna	146
1764	Defeat of Oudh Vizier at Buxar . .	147
1757-60	Ahmed Shah Abdallee occupies Punjab .	149
1758	Maratha invasion of Punjab .	150
1761	Overthrow of Marathas by Ahmed Shah at Paniput . . .	153

CHAPTER IX.

THE MARATHAS AND MYSORE.

1765	Clive returns to India . . .	156
	Clive accepts Diwáni of Bengal for the Company	157
	Clive's treaties of alliance with Oudh and the Moghul Emperor	158
1766	Grant by Moghul Emperor of Northern Sirkars .	166
1767-69	First War with Hyder Ali of Mysore .	167
1769	Hyder Ali overruns Carnatic	167
	Treaty with Nizám, Mysore, and the Marathas . . .	167

CHAPTER X

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

1767	Lord Clive left India finally . . .	169
	Financial arrangements between Lord North's Government and East India Company . . .	173

DATE		PAGE
1770	Famine in Bengal	174
1772	Select Parliamentary Committees on Indian Affairs	176
1773	First Act regulating Constitution of Indian Government (Lord North)	178
	Rejection of motion condemning Clive's conduct	178
1774	Lord Clive's death	178

CHAPTER XI.

THE GOVERNOR-GENERALSHIP OF WARREN HASTINGS

1771–73	Maratha incursions into North-West India	185
1772	Hastings Governor of Bengal	184
	Treaty between Oudh Vizier and Rohillas for defence against Marathas	187
1773	Agreement between Hastings and Oudh Vizier for joint invasion of Rohilcund	188
1774	Hastings First Governor-General in India	184
	Rohilla War and annexation of Rohilcund to Oudh	188
1775	Benares and Gházipur ceded to the English	
	Bombay Government occupy Salsette and Bassein	190
	Battle of Arras	190
1776	Trial and execution of Nuncomar.	
	Maratha War	191
	Negotiations with Marathas	192
1777–78	French correspondence with Marathas and Mysore	192
1778	War with France in Europe	192
	French settlements in India seized	193
1779	Repulse by Marathas of English advance on Poona	193
	League against English of Mysore, Marathas, and Nizám	195

DATE		PAGE
1780	Hyder Ali ravages the Carnatic . . .	196
	Gwalior fortress taken by Popham .	197
1781	Benares insurrection .	197
	Defeat of Hyder Ali at Porto Novo	196
	England at war with Spain, Holland, France and American Colonies	
	Treaty of peace with Marathas .	197
1782	Death of Hyder Ali	200
	Naval battles between French and English in Bay of Bengal	199–200
1783	General peace in Europe (Pondicherry restored)	200
1784	Treaty of peace with Tippu of Mysore .	200
	General peace in India . .	201
1785	Warren Hastings leaves India . . .	200

CHAPTER XII

INTERVAL BETWEEN HASTINGS AND CORNWALLIS, AND HOME AFFAIRS

1783	Fox's India Bill introduced into Parliament and rejected	216
1784	Pitt's First Ministry	217
	Pitt's India Act establishing Board of Commissioners for Indian affairs	217
About 1785	Sikh Power established in Punjab	209
1785	Mahdajee Sindia (Maratha) occupies Delhi	212

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF LORD CORNWALLIS AND SIR JOHN SHORE

1786	Lord Cornwallis assumes Governor-Generalship	218
1787	Tippu of Mysore sends embassies to Constantinople and Paris .	221

DATE		
1788-95	Trial of Warren Hastings.	[illegible]
1789-90	Tippu attacks Travancore	[illegible]
1790-92	War between English and Mysore	[illegible]
1791	Bangalore taken.	
1792	Tippu signs treaty of peace ceding territory	223
1793	Rupture with French and opening of the Great War (Pondicherry seized by England)	223
	Permanent Settlement of Bengal	220
	Cornwallis leaves India	231
	Act of Parliament to restrain war in India	230
1793-98	Sir John Shore (Lord Teignmouth) Governor-General	234
1794	Death of Mahdajee Sindia	225
1795	Surrender of Nizám to Marathas at Kurdla	234
1795-96	Ceylon taken from the Dutch	234
1797	Shah Zemán, the Afghan king, invades the Punjab	235
1797-98	Correspondence of Tippu with French and Afghans	235
1798	Expedition of Buonaparte to Egypt	233
	Mission from Tippu to Mauritius	236
1799	Letter from Buonaparte at Cairo to Tippu	236

CHAPTER XIV.

GOVERNOR-GENERALSHIP OF LORD WELLESLEY.

1798-1805	Lord Mornington (Marquis Wellesley) Governor-General	239
1798	Tippu's embassy returns from Mauritius	240
	Alliance with the Nizám	241
	League of England, the Nizám, and the Peshwa against Mysore	242
1799	Second War with Mysore	242
	Storming of Seringapatam and death of Tippu. Partition of Mysore	242

DATE		PAGE
1800	Subsidiary Treaty with Nizám . . .	242
1801	Incorporation of the Carnatic . . .	245
	Cession by Oudh of large territory by Subsidiary Treaty . .	249
	Civil War among Marathas and Flight of Peshwa .	252
1802	Treaty of Bassein and restoration of Peshwa	252
	Peace of Amiens in Europe	255
1803	League of Sindia and Nagpore Rája (Marathas) .	254
April 1803	Renewal of war with France . . .	256
1803	Maratha War (Assaye, Argaon, Laswaree) .	258
Dec. 1803	Treaty of peace with Sindia and Nagpore Rája	259
1804	Campaign against Holkar (Colonel Monson's reverse, Deig) .	260
1805	Unsuccessful siege of Bhurtpore .	260
	Lord Wellesley leaves India	265

CHAPTER XV

THE STATIONARY PERIOD

July–Oct. 1805	Second Governor-Generalship of Lord Cornwallis	271
Oct 1805	Death of Cornwallis	272
1805–7	Sir George Barlow Governor General	272
1806	Cape of Good Hope finally reduced	282
1807–13	Lord Minto Governor-General	273
1807–8	Napoleon plans Franco-Russian expedition to India	276
1807–8	French Embassy to Persia	277
1808	British embassies to Persia, Afghanistan, and Punjab	277
1810–11	Reduction of the Mauritius and Java	282
1815	End of the French war and confirmation by Treaty of conquests in the East	282

CHAPTER XVI.

GOVERNOR-GENERALSHIP OF LORD HASTINGS.

DATE		PAGE
1813–23	Lord Moira (afterwards Marquis of Hastings) Governor-General . . .	288
1814–16	War with Nepal . . .	294
1816	Treaty of peace and large cession of territory from Nepal .	296
	Holkar's army defeated at Mehidpore . .	300
1817–18	Operations against the Pindáris .	299
1817	Peshwa attacks British Presidency Outbreak at Nagpore . .	300
1818	Peshwa surrenders Large territorial annexations .	300

CHAPTER XVII

COMPLETION OF DOMINION.

1823–28	Lord Amherst Governor-General.	
1826	First war with Burmah Territorial cessions	307
	Bhurtpore taken by assault .	309
1828–34	Lord William Bentinck Governor-General—Commercial treaties with Punjab and Sinde .	309–13
1836–42	Lord Auckland Governor-General.	
1837	Shah of Persia besieges Herat .	314
1838	British expedition to Afghanistan Kandahar and Kábul occupied	316
1839	Death of Ranjit Singh, ruler of the Punjab .	321
1841	Murder of Burnes and Macnaghten at Kábul	
1841–42	Retreat from Kábul . .	319
1842–44	Lord Ellenborough Governor General . .	319
1842	Pollock re-captures and evacuates Kabul	319
1843	Battle of Meeanee and conquest of Sinde	321

DATE		PAGE
1844	Lord Ellenborough recalled	321
1844-48	Sir Henry Hardinge Governor-General .	321
1845-46	First Sikh War—Moodkee, Firozshah, Aliwal, Sobraon . . .	323-24
1846	Occupation of Lahore . .	324
1848	Sikh insurrection in the Punjab .	324
1848-56	Lord Dalhousie Governor-General	325
1848-49	Second Sikh War (Chilianwala, Goojerat)	325
March 29, 1849	Annexation of the Punjab	326
1852	Second war with Burmah . .	327
1852	Annexation of Pegu	327
1853-54	Interior annexation (Jhansi, Nágpore)	328
1856	Annexation of Oudh	330
1857	Mutiny of the Bengal army	331
1858	Direct government of India assumed by the Crown . .	332

CHAPTER XVIII

THE BRITISH DOMINION IN ASIA 333

CHAPTER XIX.

INDIA UNDER THE CROWN

Section I External Politics, 1858–1907

1858	Assumption by the Crown of direct government	357
1860	Declaration to Rulers of Native States	359
	Maladministration of Gaekwar of Baroda, 1875 and of Maharajah of Manipur, 1891	360
1881	Revival of State of Mysore	361
1863	The Umbeyla Campaign	362
1864	War with Bhotan	363
1876	Pacification of Beluchistan	363
1878-81	Second Afghan War	364-71
1896-97	Expedition to Chitral .	372
1885	Annexation of Burma	373
	Political frontiers of the Empire	374-75

Section II. Internal Administration, 1858–1907.

DATE		PAGE
1860	Reorganization of the Provinces . .	377
1861	The India Councils Act, High Courts of Judicature, and Penal Codes	380
1862	Departure of Lord Canning and appointment of Lord Dalhousie .	380
	Reconstitution of Civil and Domestic Laws	382
	Agrarian Reforms . .	384
	Railways .	386
1897	Queen Victoria, Empress of India .	387
	Education and Progress . . .	389-90

COLOURED MAPS

TO ILLUSTRATE THE HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF INDIA

INDIA IN 1760	*To face page* 136
INDIA IN 1784 .	" " 204
INDIA IN 1805	" " 284
INDIA IN 1857 . .	" " 332
THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN ASIA .	*At end*

*** These Maps are not intended to exhibit accurately the topography of Indian places or provinces. They are merely coloured so as to show approximately the actual extent of the British Possessions or Protectorates at different periods.

THE RISE AND EXPANSION

OF THE

BRITISH DOMINION IN INDIA

INTRODUCTION

THE narrative of the acquisition of British India forms no more than an episode in the annals of the English nation. It is therefore not unnatural that historians, being mainly intent upon European affairs, should be usually satisfied with treating the foundation by an English trading company of a great Oriental empire as a marvellous and almost incomprehensible stroke of national good fortune To those, however, who follow carefully the course and connexion of events that led up to this magnificent result, and who bear in mind that foreign commerce is the life-blood of a maritime people, that for two centuries, at least, the whole policy of England has been mainly directed towards the increase of her sea-power and the enlargement of her foreign commerce—insomuch that, as Sir H Parnell said, almost all our wars during the eighteenth century were virtually waged on behalf of that commerce—the fact that India has been the great prize of continuous

success in naval war and trading adventure will not appear astonishing, and certainly not inexplicable. The object of this short treatise is not only to give a concise account of the rise of British dominion in India, but also to explain it by tracing rapidly the causes and convergent influences that brought about so remarkable a conclusion.

It is a matter of general remark that Anglo-Indian history, when related at length, is tedious and confusing. This is partly due to unfamiliarity with outlandish names and places, but chiefly to its essential character. The history, like the annals of almost all Oriental States, is mainly concerned, up to very recent times, with military operations, which in India seldom rise above the level of desultory fighting, and with that class of politics that consists largely of revolts, conspiracies, dynastic contests, and the ordinary incidents of a struggle for existence among rival despots In Asia there is no scope for examining the growth of institutions or the development of civil polity or the forming of nations; the famous men are all either able tyrants (in the Greek sense) or successful men of war, the type of civilization is uniform and stationary, the spirit of nationality, where it exists, is in its most elementary stage, the people of the great kingdoms known to history are an immense mixed multitude, broken up into tribal or religious groups, and united under one leadership by force or accident. At the present moment every great country in Asia is governed by an alien race or foreign dynasty that has come in by conquest, there is no general identity of language or of religion between the rulers and the mass of their subjects, they have accordingly accepted changes of government with indifference; they had no inveterate

antipathy to the domination of foreigners. The Indian people were, from the beginning, so far from objecting to the English dominion in India that they co-operated willingly in promoting it.

Nevertheless the existing relations between India and England constitute a political situation unprecedented in the world's history. The two countries are far distant from each other, in different continents, they present the strongest contrasts of race and religion. There is no previous example of the acquisition and successful government of such a dependency, so immense in extent and population, at such a distance from the central power. A State that is distinctly superior to its neighbours in the arts of war and government has often expanded into a great empire The conquests of Alexander the Macedonian founded an Asiatic empire which, under his successors, spread Hellenic ideas and institutions from the eastern shores of the Mediterranean almost up to the borders of India, and it was long maintained, amid a vast indigenous population, by the intellectual pre-eminence and political vigour of the Greek rulers When the Romans took over from the Greeks the dominion over the lands west of the Euphrates river, they united under an extensive dominion and still wider ascendancy a number of subject provinces, client kingdoms, protected allies, races, and tribes, in Asia and Europe, by a system of conquest and an administrative organization that anticipated in many salient features our methods of governing India. But the Roman dominions were compact and well knit together by solid communications. The Romans were masters of the whole Mediterranean littoral, and their capital, whether at Rome or Constantinople, held a central and commanding position.

Then at the present time we see Russia holding down Northern Europe with one foot, and Central Asia with the other. She is the first power that has succeeded so completely in throwing down the barriers which have hitherto divided the East from the West, as to found a colossal dominion in the heart of both continents. But with the Roman, Russian, and all other historical empires the mass of their territory has been accumulated by advancing step after step along the land from the central starting-point, making one foothold sure before another was taken, firmly placing one arch of the viaduct before another was thrown out, allowing no interruption of territorial coherence from the centre to the circumference. This was not so in the case of the Indian empire. During the time when the English were establishing their predominance in India, and long afterwards, England was separated from India by thousands of miles of sea, the Atlantic and Indian oceans lay between. The government of the English in India may thus be said to present an unique instance of the dominion over an immense alien people in a distant country having been acquired entirely by gradual expansion from a base on the sea.

Of the political changes introduced during the last 150 years by the overflow of Europe into Asia, the acquisition of all India and Burmah by the English has hitherto been incomparably the greatest; although the steady advance of Russia, pushing forward her steel wedges into the central regions, is fraught with no less momentous import to the destinies of the Continent. But while Russia has been laboriously following the well-known and well-worn routes of conquest by land through the central steppes of Asia, the English have

reached South Asia swiftly and securely by the open water-ways. And thus it has come to pass that, whereas all previous conquests of India have been made from the mountains southward to the sea, the English have acquired their dominion by an expansion from the sea northward to the mountains. It need hardly be observed that this very remarkable exploit could only have been performed by virtue of great naval strength and superiority.

In the following pages some attempt is made to sketch the preliminary events and predisposing conditions that attracted the maritime nations of Europe into the field of competition for predominance in India, and to explain the combination of direct effort and favourable circumstances to which England in the eighteenth century owed her success.

CHAPTER I

EARLY COMPETITION FOR INDIAN COMMERCE

SECTION I *Italy, Spain, and Portugal*

FROM time immemorial the trade of Europe with the rich and productive countries of South-Eastern Asia, particularly with India and the islands of the Malay archipelago, has been the most lucrative branch of the world's commerce It has been the object of fierce and persistent competition by sea and land among the more enterprising and civilized European States, of a contest that increased with the spirit of adventure and the desire for wealth, and it has made the fortune of every city or nation that has successively obtained the largest share of it For nearly eighteen centuries [1], from the days of the Ptolemies almost until the Portuguese rounded the African Cape, Alexandria was an emporium and half-way station of the sea-borne trade The Roman emperors, who were deeply interested in developing the prosperity of Egypt, spared no pains to monopolize the commercial navigation of the Red Sea. They sent more than one naval expedition against the south-west coast of Arabia with the object of seizing Aden (then,

[1] Robertson, *Disquisition concerning Ancient India.*

as now, a most important station) and of wresting the Indian trade out of the hands of the Arabs In fact they attempted, though unsuccessfully, to acquire very much the same position in those waters as that which the English have at last succeeded in establishing after an interval of sixteen centuries. Although the Roman navy was not strong enough to dislodge the Arabs, yet the direct European maritime traffic with the East in the time of the Flavian emperors took almost exactly the route into which, after some wide aberrations, it seems at length to have again settled down—the route, that is, by Egypt, Suez, and Aden across the Indian Ocean to the ports on the Western coast of India The jealousy that was excited in Rome by the rich and enterprising merchants of Palmyra, who were diverting the stream of Eastern traffic into an overland route from the Persian Gulf up the Euphrates to Syria, is said to have been one reason for the destruction of that flourishing city In this manner the Roman empire, while at its zenith, obtained a wider command over the main channels of Asiatic trade than has ever been since held by any European power except England, and England has also the great advantage that she not only commands the channels but, by her dominion in India, possesses the largest source of this mighty commercial stream

The outpouring of the Arab tribes under Mahomed's successors upset the civilized government to which the routes by the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf owed their security. When the conquests of Islam had overflowed Egypt and Syria, Constantinople became for a time the chief storehouse of the Levant, and the main current of trade with India and China took the line across Central Asia to the Black Sea, avoiding the countries recently

overrun by the Mahomedans. 'The commerce of Europe centred at Constantinople in the eighth and ninth centuries more completely than it has ever done since in any one city[1];' the Greek navy was the largest then in existence. But misrule, fiscal oppression, and foreign invasions, ruined the Byzantine empire. As Constantinople declined, Venice and Genoa, the cities of the inland sea which lay beyond the desolating range of Asiatic conquest, rose into splendid prominence. It was the spirit of very short-sighted commercial jealousy that actuated the Venetians when, having contracted to convey the armies of the Fourth Crusade across the Mediterranean to Egypt, they insisted on an expedition against Constantinople, which was taken by the Latins in 1204. The blow fatally weakened the Greek power in the East, which henceforward opposed less and less resistance to the invading Turkish hordes. In the meantime the Italian cities had become the principal agents for the importation into Europe of the precious commodities of Asia, insomuch that in the fifteenth century the Venetians appeared literally to 'hold the gorgeous East in fee,' for they were not far from possessing the whole of this enormously profitable business.

At the end of that century two capital events in the annals of the world's commerce occurred suddenly and almost simultaneously—the discovery of America and the doubling of the Cape of Good Hope. Their effect was to give vast extension to the sea-borne trade with Asia, to turn its main volume into new channels by opening out direct communication by ships between South Asia and the countries bordering on the Atlantic; and to augment very greatly the supply of gold and

[1] Finlay, *Byzantine Empire*, 248.

[illegible] for exchange against Asiatic products. The exploration of the globe, eastward and westward, produced navigation on a grand scale; and the superior skill, audacity, and capital of Europeans have ever since secured them a monopoly of the carrying trade on all the high seas. The contest among the nations of Europe for superiority in this new field of enterprise soon began in earnest. When the Pope Alexander Borgia issued his Bull dividing the whole undiscovered non-Christian world between Spain and Portugal, he awarded India to the latter power; whereupon the Portuguese, who had been pushing their dominion southward along the West African coast throughout the fifteenth century, at once took a much wider flight. They proceeded with ruthless energy to establish their fortified settlements on the Indian coast, to seize points of vantage in the Indian Ocean, and to beat off all attempts by the Mahomedan sovereigns at Alexandria and Constantinople to resist European predominance in those waters. It may be thought fortunate that even Solyman the Magnificent, in the height of his glory, failed in his efforts to expel the Portuguese from the Indian Ocean, for his success might have been disastrous to Eastern Christendom. If the Turkish Sultan, who at the opening of the sixteenth century was supreme in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, and whose fleets swept the Mediterranean, could have kept the Indian trade to its ancient and direct course through Egypt and Syria, the wealth that he might thus have secured must have added prodigiously to the force of his arms by sea and land. A colossal military empire upon the Bosphorus, commanding the avenues of Asiatic trade, might even in our own days overawe half Europe, and would have

been irresistible three hundred years ago. Yet Venice foresaw so clearly that the diversion of trade to the ocean route would be her death-blow, that she vigorously, though in vain, supported the Turkish Sultan. When the Venetian envoy at Lisbon wrote that he had seen vessels return to that port from Asia loaded with Indian goods, his government became aware that the most important branch of their commerce was in danger of being cut off[1]. By the end of the sixteenth century that inestimable privilege, the chief control of Eastern commerce in European waters, had passed for ever out of the hands of the Italian cities, whose gradual commercial decay from that epoch showed plainly where lay the mainspring of their prosperity and political expansion[2]. From the shores of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, from Alexandria and Constantinople, from Venice and Genoa, the rich trade of India with Europe was now transferred to the ocean-going peoples of Western Europe. It was cut off in the Indian seas and almost monopolized for a time by Portugal, whose sovereigns improved their opportunity with remarkable activity, sending out fleets to range over the whole coast of South Asia from the Persian Gulf to Ceylon They seized naval stations on the Persian Gulf, and made strenuous efforts to establish their naval ascendancy in the Red Sea; but in 1517 the Osmanli Sultan had annexed Egypt to his empire,

[1] 'Magnique illi proventus qui urbem opulentam reddidissent toti pene terrarum orbi rebus Indicis tradendis civitatem deficerent. Eo nuntio patres accepto non parvam animi aegritudinem contraxerunt.'—Benbo, *Daru*, iii 113.

[2] 'Par la decouverte du cap de Bonne-Espérance, et celles qu'on fit quelque temps après, l'Italie ne fut plus au centre du monde commerçant; elle fut, pour ainsi dire, dans un coin de l'univers, et elle y est encore.'—Montesquieu, *Esprit des lois*, xxi. cap. xxi.

and the Turkish fleets were too strong for the Portuguese. Their period of triumphant prosperity was short, for in 1580 all the strength and soul of Portuguese enterprise were crushed out of her by annexation to Spain The Spaniards threw away their opportunity; they found it easier to dig up the precious metals in America than to make long voyages to India; and instead of using their treasure they tried to hoard it The Spanish trade was mainly a monopoly of the Government, which was more bent on territorial conquest than on commerce, because its principal object was to acquire the gold and silver mines. From the days of the Romans up to our own time the Indian trade has drained the gold and silver of Europe, but the Spaniards were under the delusion, so long prevalent in Europe, that to export bullion is to exhaust a country's wealth; so that their commerce with Asia was fatally hampered by strict prohibitions against sending the precious metals abroad This false mercantile theory must have materially retarded the expansion of the foreign trade of Europe; for we find the East India Company in the seventeenth century constantly accused of impoverishing England by their despatches of bullion. It was indeed long before any but the maritime trading classes, to whom the needs and practice of distant commerce brought real experience, understood that the precious metals, no less than quicksilver, must find their own natural level, or must fall in value.

By the end of the sixteenth century, therefore, the sea-borne trade of Asia with Europe had passed away from the Mediterranean cities, from Alexandria and Constantinople, from Venice and Genoa, and was being rapidly taken up by the maritime populations of the Atlantic and the North Sea The direct waterway had been discovered, commercial competition

among the Western nations was beginning; and the opening of sea communication established new points of contact between Europe and Asia, slowly but surely growing into a close connexion that has affected the subsequent history of both continents, has largely influenced the politics of the maritime powers, and has determined the whole destiny of India. When Queen Elizabeth recognized the independence of the Dutch republic (declared in 1578) and thus became committed to war with Spain, the united naval forces of England and Holland were directed against the Asiatic settlements of Portugal, which were then, as has been said, under the Spanish crown The desperate struggle of the United Provinces against Philip II exposed Spanish vessels to the vindictive hostility of the Protestant traders in Eastern waters, and the great victory over the Spanish Armada (1588) gave confidence to England. In a memorial addressed to the Queen in 1589 the English merchants ask for licence and encouragement to their project of pushing forward adventures in the East Indies. Such a trade, they say, 'would by degrees add to the shipping, seamen, and naval force of the kingdom, in the same manner as it has increased the Portuguese fleets' The Spaniards, however, took such grave umbrage at the preparations made in England to interfere with their East Indian monopoly, that in 1599 the granting of a Charter to the English Company was postponed for eighteen months by Elizabeth's Privy Council, who were at the moment negotiating peace with Spain In 1600, however, upon renewed solicitations from the Adventurers for the East Indian voyage, a Charter was given, for fifteen years, by the Crown to the London Company. This deed of incorporation stands as a historic monument, commemorating the inception of a great enterprise; it records

the origin and indicates the direction of that great current of Asiatic trade whose ever rising flow during three centuries has brought wealth and power to the English nation.

At this period, moreover, the common right of all nations to trade freely and peacefully with Asia though it was asserted by the Dutch as against the Spanish monopoly, was in fact no more recognized than a common international right to cultivate or colonize. Each country was striving to seize and appropriate the largest possible share of this profitable commerce, to the forcible exclusion of all interlopers, they were all contending for complete and masterful possession, they were conquering by water as they might be conquering by land, and fiercely attacking any intruder upon their trading ground as if he were an invader of their territory At the end of the sixteenth century the Spaniards claimed the whole right of trade with the East Indies as part of their sovereignty, the Indian seas were their territorial waters, they permitted no European port except their own to exist upon the Indian seaboard 'The Indies,' they declared, 'East and West, are our house, privately possessed by us for more than a hundred years, and no one has a right to enter without our permission'; they claimed over these vast regions the same sovereign jurisdiction that we now affirm over our Indian empire The Spanish President of the Council of the Indies told our ambassador plainly 'that in coercions and punishments to restrain access to these countries, he had an inclination rather to cruelty than to clemency,' and that the case for free trade was far different there from elsewhere, because these dominions were Spanish, by the rule of nations In 1605 the Spaniards threatened with the severest penalties any Hollander presuming to trade in the East

Indies, but the war between Spain and her revolted provinces was carried on in Asia as bitterly as in Europe, and largely accelerated the downfall of the old Portuguese domination on the Indian seaboard. There was some desperate fighting in the Malacca Straits, and in the China sea, with merciless slaughter after a defeat[1] The question of the Eastern trade was the most difficult and obstinately disputed point in the negotiations which ended with the recognition by Spain of Holland's independence The Spanish king offered in 1607 to renounce his claim of sovereignty over the United Provinces if the Dutch would on their side abandon their navigation to the East Indies But the Dutch treated this as the most valuable property of their own State, they knew the Indian commerce to be the chief stay and subsistence of naval dominion in either country, they saw that while they would be ruined by resigning it, by retaining it they should keep the power of retaliating in Asia upon Spain for oppression or injuries in Europe They insisted so firmly on their right to trade freely in the East Indies that the Spaniards at last gave way upon the point, though it was never openly conceded.

SECTION II *Holland, England, and France*

But although the Dutch asserted trade liberties against Spain, their own policy was to establish the strictest monopoly Between 1597 and 1600 the Dutch ships had first rounded the Cape of Good Hope into Asiatic waters, where they were very fiercely handled by the Spanish forces in that quarter In 1602 the Universal East India Company had been founded in

[1] 'A Portuguese ship chased ashore and all the company drowned but two or three'—*Records*, 1607

Holland, with exclusive privilege of trading east of the Cape and west of the Magellan Straits, with a great capital subscribed by all the provinces, with full power to make peace and war in the name of the United Provinces, to levy troops, and to appoint generals. Strong fleets were sent out with orders to expel the Spanish-Portuguese from the Spice Islands and the Indian coasts, to found settlements, and in fact to annex the trade to Holland precisely as they might annex an enemy's province. In the beginning these proceedings were taken in co-operation with the English, who now make their first substantial appearance, as represented by a Company, in the field of Asiatic commerce. But the two nations soon began to quarrel in Asia, though in Europe they preserved amity, and in 1611 the London merchants prayed for protection and redress, representing that the Hollanders were driving them out of all places of traffic in the East Indies. When a joint Commission was appointed to settle matters, the Dutch 'challenged the sole trade in spices,' nor could any arrangement be mediated. It is worth noticing, as showing the value of the trade even at that early time, that in 1615 the Dutch are reported to have fifty-one ships in the East Indies, with a stock of £900,000 sterling, and £400,000 taken up at interest. The English Company paid £14,000 customs in 1615 for the cargo of two ships, and in 1616 one ship alone was valued at better than £140,000. A proposal by Holland that the Dutch and English should form one Joint Stock Company, divide their spheres of traffic, and combine forces in order wholly to drive Spain out of the East Indies, was rejected, partly because James I still leant toward a Spanish alliance. Thus all attempts to arrest or adjust the earliest disputes of England and Holland

over their respective limits and shares in such an enormously lucrative trade naturally failed; indeed they served only to complicate the impending quarrel.

Upon one point only the two Protestant nations agreed cordially—in their inveterate hostility to the Spanish and Portuguese. They spared no pains to beat off and expel from the coast of India the Portuguese, who were at this time (1613–15) in very bad odour with the Moghul government for having seized a great ship in which the emperor's mother was the principal shareholder The correspondence of the English Company at this period is filled with reports of fierce battles with the Portuguese, in one of which, at Surat, for example, between 400 and 500 'Portugals' were slain, burnt, and drowned This rather sanguinary business is mentioned in an ordinary letter which goes on without change of tone to give the prices of commodities and the colours of cloths that will not keep fast in an Indian climate By 1615 the trade of Portugal had, we are told, infinitely decayed, and the Spanish government showed very little concern at the rapid impoverishment of that kingdom. In Holland, on the contrary, the Republic looked upon its East India trade as 'a high point of state,' and assisted the Company with great sums of money But the substitution of Dutchmen for Portuguese as our rivals in this part of the world was by no means an advantage to us Their estrangement from England, originally caused by the wavering policy of the first two Stuarts, who leaned first toward Spain and afterwards toward France, was undoubtedly fostered by growing commercial jealousies Thenceforward throughout the seventeenth century, the annals of our East Indian affairs record a continuous persevering contest between the English and Dutch for advantage in the Indian

trade, and for possession of the settlements that were necessary to its existence. The Dutch had gradually annexed most of the principal Portuguese settlements; they asserted paramount European power in all those seas and islands; so that they constantly came into sharp collision with the English, who were still weak in those regions, and whose merchant adventurers were ill supported by the vacillating and unpopular government of James I and his son Charles

It should be understood that the term 'East Indies,' according to the nomenclature of those days, comprised not only India proper, but also the countries on the east side of the Bay of Bengal, the straits of Malacca Java, Siam, and all the Spice Islands further eastward in the Java and Chinese seas, such as the Celebes and the Moluccas With China and Japan also a very active commercial intercourse had been established by the English Company, 'something under cent per cent' being reckoned a reasonable rate of profit on sales. In the first half of the seventeenth century the traffic with the Spice Islands was by far the most important and profitable[1], and from this branch of the general East India trade the Dutch were determined to exclude us, for indeed upon this commerce the prosperity of their State and people largely depended They did in fact so thwart and embarrass the operations of the English Company in the waters of Eastern Asia, beyond the Malacca Straits, that the English gradually withdrew from many of their stations in that region and shifted their trade more and more as time went on, towards the coasts of India and the countries adjacent. From this tendency of the English to con

[1] Profits of an English ship's voyage to the Clove islands in 1606—234 per cent on the original sum subscribed —Bruce's *Annals of the East India Company*

centrate their business upon the ports and factories of the Indian mainland, and to cultivate relations with the Moghul empire, we may deduce some ulterior consequences of much importance in regard to the course and character of their subsequent expansion.

In this manner began the contest for valuable markets that gave so strong an impulse, at this period, to the system of chartered companies, for the early traders in Asiatic waters had to fight their own way and hold their own ground, they could expect little or no help in Asia from their own governments, and nothing but merciless hostility from their European rivals. Trade was more valuable, to the maritime folk, than territory, and commerce than conquest But traffic with distant lands could not be carried on without taking up stations and arming ships, since the understanding among European nations was that regular diplomatic relations did not practically extend beyond certain well-known lines of longitude A single ship would be always liable to be seized and sunk, a small trading settlement in a seaport was likely to be worried or plundered by some native chief or governor, while the rival European traders would certainly spare no pains to ruin its business. According to a treaty made between France and Spain in 1598, in the regions westward of the Canary Islands 'tout serait à la force', and although Spain and Portugal claimed immense jurisdictions, political and ecclesiastic, in the East, yet these were of a nature too impalpable and fluctuating to be distinctly acknowledged by international law. The Chartered Companies therefore represented a device, invented to suit these conditions of existence, for extending commerce and for securing it by territorial appropriations, without directly pledging a government to answer for

the acts of its subjects, or to accept responsibility for the rough and ready ways of the fighting traders. The Charter expressed the delegation of certain sovereign powers for distinct purposes; it amounted from one point of view to a licence for private war; and the system has since had a long, eventful, and curious history, which has as yet by no means ended.

The point to be observed is that this system, under which the foundations of our Indian empire were laid, was something very different from the kind of scrambling haphazard adventure to which the establishment of that empire is by common imagination so often ascribed. On the contrary, it provided, in the hands of a free and wealthy people, a very powerful instrument of colonial and commercial expansion. The prize in dispute was a share, or if possible the monopoly, of the commerce between western Europe and all the ports of Asia from the Red Sea to China and Japan. The early records of the East India Company show that along the whole accessible coast line of the Asiatic continent and among the islands, at every point where trading could be done—on the Arabian seaboard, in the Persian Gulf, from the western side of India to north-eastern China—the European nations were now contending vigorously for commercial profits and privileges. The value of the prize for which they were competing was even then perfectly well known; and subsequent history has proved that the wealth, liberties, and political predominance at home of the contending nations depended considerably on their failure or success. It was the foreign imports that brought the revenue which maintained the great fleets and armies of Spain; it was maritime trade that fed the stubborn

power of resistance displayed by the Dutch Republic, and the greatness of England has been manifestly founded upon her world-ranging commerce.[1] By far the most important branch of sea-borne traffic was, in the seventeenth century, the exchange of goods with Asia, and each national government took part, directly or indirectly, in the struggle for it The first maritime explorers from the despotically-governed States of Spain and Portugal seized lands and claimed navigation rights in the name of their crown, which at once treated all these captures as increments to its complete sovereignty Between the Dutch Republic and its East India Company the connexion was exceedingly close, although a formal distinction was always maintained In 1618 this Company, as we learn from an English report, was composed of the greatest part of the Privy Council, the nobility, judges, and gentry, and was furnished with an assured stock of £1,600,000 When, in 1617, the English East India Company raised its second Joint Stock, the sum of £1,620,040 was at once subscribed in London, and the records of 1622 state that goods bought in India for £356,288 had produced £1,914,600 in England Here were two great commercial associations with power and resources quite equal to those of the minor States at that period But while the State of Holland was, so to speak, incorporate in its Company, the English adopted from the beginning, and preserved up to the end of the eighteenth century,

[1] 'Surely at this day, with us of Europe, the vantage of strength at sea (which is one of the principal dowries of this kingdom of Great Britain) is great, both because most of the kingdoms of Europe are girt with the sea most part of their compass, and because the wealth of both Indies seems in great part but an accessory to the command of the seas' —Bacon, *Of the true Greatness of Kingdoms*

a system under which the State held a position not unlike that of partner *en commandite*, taking no risks, acknowledging very slight responsibility, interfering occasionally to demand a share of profits or to lay a heavy fine upon Charter renewals, a kind of sleeping partner in the concern, waking up to lend a hand only when the general political interests of the nation seemed likely to be compromised. Armed with a valuable monopoly, and left to their own resources, the English Company relied not so much upon State aid as upon their own wealth and energy, they underwent some perilous vicissitudes and performed some remarkable exploits

The extent to which unofficial war was practised, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, by the roving nations of Europe, is perhaps hardly appreciated in this age of international law and ubiquitous diplomacy. If our merchants in India or the Persian Gulf had been obliged to refer home for remedy of grievances or settlement of disputes with Dutch, French, or Portuguese, they would have been very soon exterminated[1]. They did no such thing, they took to their own weapons, and their military operations were often upon a considerable scale In 1622 there was formal peace between Portugal (which then belonged to Spain) and England, but the English East India Company were at bitter war in the Indian Ocean with the Portuguese,

[1] 'He that shall call to mind what strange effects sudden and resolute enterprizes have brought to pass both in India amongst those naked heathens, yea, even in Christendom itself, will never conclude that either the Portugal or the Fleming hath attained their footing in these parts with manners or shallie shallie, as the world doth truly take notice' *Letter of Thomas Dalten*, 'Lord Captain,' *from Java* (1620,

who had disturbed their trade and molested the Honourable Company's ships. So the English Company fitted out at Surat a small fleet, and sent it up the Persian Gulf with orders to assist Shah Abbas, the Persian king, in turning the Portuguese out of the island of Hormuz, which they had held for a century, and which gave them exclusive command of the Gulf. The business was done, with the aid of the Persians, very thoroughly; there was a regular bombardment of the fortress, and a naval action with the Portuguese royal fleet, until the island was surrendered, the fortifications razed, and the Portuguese garrison transported to Goa

We do not hear that Portugal made any serious remonstrance against these proceedings, which would certainly startle modern diplomacy, but it stands on record that James I and the Lord High Admiral (the Duke of Buckingham) exacted large sums of money from the Company as the royal share of the profits Another heavy fine was again demanded by Buckingham from the Company before he would permit them to despatch a fleet for the protection of their commerce against Portuguese reprisals Probably the English might have claimed to set off against the affair at Hormuz other similar irregularities on the part of the Portuguese, for among the nations then engaged on the East India trade there was little scruple about ways and means of dealing with rivals

But the Dutch, though formally our friends and allies, soon became much more dangerous enemies in Asia than the Portuguese, and were now inflicting heavy damage on our East Indian trade, which the English Company was by no means disposed to endure The two Companies were rapidly drifting into a rather

ferocious war, quite uncontrolled by international law or military usage, in which little quarter was given and nothing spared that might extirpate the enemy. Both sides possessed armed ships and fortified stations; but although the Dutch had many more forts and a much larger territory than the English, their policy of seizing all the points of vantage had this drawback, that it involved them in quarrels with the native chiefs, and crippled their capital by heavy military charges. After protracted negotiations, however, a treaty was at last arranged between Holland and England in 1619 on the basis of mutual restitutions and compensations. The news, we learn from the correspondence, reached India just in time to prevent 'a bloody encounter between 11 of our best ships and 17 of the Dutch.' This treaty, which was made for twenty years, actually lasted less than twenty months, and seems to have been little regarded in the East Indies, where the necessities of commercial competition went on multiplying disputes and reciprocal violence, until one particularly atrocious outrage brought matters to a climax. The massacre by the Dutch of almost all the English at Amboyna (in the Moluccas) in 1623, was a piece of cruel iniquity that bred long and fierce resentment against Holland among the English merchants and mariners of that generation, and heated the animosities that broke out later between the two nations in Europe.

The preponderance of the Dutch in the Spice Islands, and their dangerous enmity, had undoubtedly much weight in diverting English trade toward the Asiatic continent, and thus in making the factories on the Indian sea-coast the principal object of our attention. On the western side of India the English had settled first at Surat, in 1612, under a *firman* of the Moghul

government, with special privileges procured by Sir Thomas Roe's embassy[1] from James I to the Emperor Jehángir. In 1630 the English and Portuguese fleets fought a respectable battle in that roadstead, without prejudice to international relations at home And as the Dutch were now making virulent attacks upon the possessions of Portugal in India and Ceylon, her power had by this time fallen into a rapid decline When, in 1640, she recovered her independence as a kingdom, she made some feeble attempts to hold her ground in Asia, but after the Treaty of Munster (1648) which limited her Indian possessions, Portugal fell irremediably into the background In 1638 Surat became the English Company's chief establishment, and by 1643 they were established on the east coast at Masulipatam and Madras, with a factory up the Hooghly river for the Bengal traffic Their influence at the Moghul's court was substantially promoted by the deputation of Mr. Boughton, a surgeon in the East India Company's service, to Agra, for the purpose of professionally treating the emperor, who afterwards appointed him physician to the household By the middle of the seventeenth century the Company were trading all along the southern seaboard of Asia, from the Persian Gulf eastward to the borders of China and as the commercial operations of the Dutch took the same geographical range, the two nations were in close competition and incessant collision throughout this extensive line But the quarrel at home between King and Parliament checked English enterprise at the fountain-head. For our government could only lend a weak and fluctuating support in disputes with foreign rivals, while Holland and even Portugal were actively

[1] 1615-18

backed by their respective governments, who gave the direct weight of national authority to all expeditions and annexations in the East. As the English Company were thus virtually in the position of a private association contending against two sovereign powers, it is not surprising that toward the end of the civil war they were in very low water, while the Dutch had gained superiority over the English on the Indian coasts, were cutting off their trade with the Spice Islands, and treating them with the greatest arrogance everywhere. The State papers of this time record incessant complaints of the 'intolerable injuries, cruelty, insolency, and cunning circumventing projects' of the Dutch in the East Indies, who made no scruple about sending fleets with large bodies of soldiers to seize or expel foreign merchants, and to occupy stations, whenever it was their interest to do so.

The English Company were also much troubled by the encroachments of interlopers, or private independent traders, some of whom were little better than pirates, for whose misconduct in Asiatic waters the Company were nevertheless often called to account by the local authorities. In default of any diplomatic or consular relations between Europe and Asia, a responsible trading association, holding regular grants and licences from the Moghul or his governors, was naturally regarded as representing the nationality to which it belonged, and had to suffer reprisals or pay indemnities for the misdeeds of its compatriots. Still graver consequences might follow offence given by the independent English merchantmen to the Portuguese or the Dutch, who thought little of sinking an intruding vessel, drowning the whole crew deliberately, or levelling an obnoxious factory. Only a company supported by the

associations. How these armed associations were subsequently converted into political powers will be seen hereafter.

In the meantime, as the strength and stability of the Dutch Republic increased in Europe from the beginning of this century, their enterprise in Asia became bolder and more high-handed. During the Thirty Years War Holland was supported on the Continent by the Protestant States of Germany and by France against Austria and Spain, the two bigoted despotisms that menaced all Europe Such an alliance, being peculiarly favourable to the security of Holland on the land, rendered her a very serious rival to England on the sea. The Dutch were throwing the English into the shade; they had founded their East Indian empire, they had made good a footing in Brazil, they had captured in West Indian waters the Spanish ships that carried a rich cargo from Mexico to Havana, they had annihilated the fleet of the Infanta Isabella They were becoming masters of the narrow seas at home, they were threatening, with the aid of France, the Spanish Netherlands, and the English were feeling much alarm lest Holland and France together should possess themselves of the whole coast line over against England across the Channel[1].

These were the advantages that gave Holland pre-eminence in Asiatic commerce during the greater part of the seventeenth century She had stripped Portugal of some of her most important possessions in the East, and had fixed her trading posts firmly in well-chosen places. Under Cromwell's vigorous rule, however, the

[1] Letter of the French ambassador in London to his Court (April 28, 1635), 'La grande liaison de Messieurs les États avec le roy (de France) leur donne grande jalousie.'

English began to recover their position in the East Indies. The jealousies, political and commercial, between the two Republics culminated in the war of 1651–4, when East India merchants, whose grievances had formed one of the chief grounds of hostility, prayed for permission to fit out an armed fleet against the Dutch in Asia, who had been making depredations on our shipping in Indian waters In 1654 a peace was patched up upon payment of compensation for injuries, especially for the 'bloodie business of Amboyna,' and with the effect of defining the situation of the English on the Indian littoral Nevertheless, although the enmity and the encroachments of the Dutch in Asia by no means ceased, the proposals made to Cromwell for dissolving the Company's monopoly and throwing open the whole Asiatic trade were so tempting to a ruler who was in sore need of ready-money, that he was hardly dissuaded from it by the combined weight of the arguments and liberal subsidies of the London Company Yet it was absolutely clear that free-traders in Asia would have fallen an easy prey to the common enemy, for the power of the Dutch was again on the increase They now maintained large military and naval forces in the East Indies, obstructed our trade, harassed our agencies, and disregarded all treaties They drove the English off the coast of Eastern Asia, seized Ceylon, blockaded Bantam —the Company's headquarters in Java—and once more tried to exterminate the English factories in the Spice Islands

Meanwhile the trade was much disturbed, and the Company's settlements were put in jeopardy, by the civil war that broke out in India among the sons of Shah Jehan in 1658, during that emperor's life. By 1660, however, Aurangzeb's triumph over his brothers

had restored tranquillity. The beginning of his long reign, full of importance to Anglo-Indian history, synchronizes with the Restoration of Charles II, an event which changed the political connexions of England and materially affected our commercial system. The Company wanted more extensive powers; and Charles II wanted to obliterate from their existing Charter the name of Cromwell; so he gave them a new Charter, authorizing them to make peace and war with any people not being Christian, although in fact their only troublesome enemies belonged to Christendom. Portugal now sought the English alliance in the hope of recovering some of her Eastern possessions that she had lost while under the Spanish yoke, or at least of defending against the Dutch what she had been able to retain These negotiations brought us the valuable acquisition of the island of Bombay, which was ceded to England in 1661, as the pledge of an arrangement for a kind of defensive war against the Dutch in Asia. But since the Portuguese were as jealous of the English as they were afraid of the Dutch, some years passed before the English found themselves in quiet possession of the island, nor was it until 1669 that Bombay and St Helena were granted in full property to the London Company

In 1661 Charles II had granted to this Company by Charter the entire English traffic in the East Indies, with licence to coin money administer justice, and punish interlopers, and he confirmed their authority to make war and peace with non-Christian States in those parts He had also adopted Cromwell's famous Navigation Law, which was devised to give our sailors and shipping a monopoly of the transport of goods interchanged with England, and was chiefly aimed at the

Dutch, who were then the principal carriers of the sea-borne trade of Europe.

In this manner the commercial resources of England were formed, organized, and directed towards maintaining an equal contest against inveterate foes; nor can there be any doubt that trade monopolies were in those days essential to the existence of our commercial settlements in Asia We had then no diplomatic representatives in non-Christian countries, the home governments paid no attention to the grievances of any single merchant or ship-master, and the Amboyna massacre is only one example of the reckless methods in use among commercial rivals in distant countries Without large capital, an armament, and authority to use it, without some kind of rough jurisdiction over their countrymen in distant settlements, no mercantile association could preserve sufficient influence at home or security for their ships at sea and their foreign stations

All these measures for strengthening the East India trade angered the Dutch, who were also alarmed by the sale of Dunkirk to France, which let the French into the narrow seas, and by the weakening of the Spanish barrier of the Netherlands between France and Holland. The quarrel with England over Eastern affairs became sharper and more virulent, for the Dutch were resolved to check and beat back the encroachment of the English on their Asiatic trade; and the English on their side were continually exasperated by the acts of violence committed against their traders in the East In 1664 the French ambassador reported from London that England was read to come to blows with the Hollanders (on meurt d'envie de les attaquer), but it was then the policy of Louis XIV, who had just been induced by Colbert to launch the French East

India Company, to preserve peace He feared that if war broke out it would end by giving irresistible naval superiority to the nation that won[1], and as his navy was not ready, he was anxious to maintain a balance of naval power on the French coast Nevertheless the quarrel grew so bitter that war did begin in 1665, when the French king was obliged, reluctantly, to join the Dutch, being under treaty obligation to do so.

In short, at the beginning of the seventeenth century the desire to destroy the colonies and commerce of Spain and Portugal united against them the Dutch and English in the East Indies Then, as the power of the Spanish empire waned, the two Northern nations, having the Asiatic field to themselves for a time, turned savagely on each other But the fierce naval fighting that ensued between the Dutch and English enfeebled both nations, and they soon became equally distrustful of the designs of the French not only in Europe, but also in Asia, for France was now entering the arena, although many years were still to pass before she could establish herself substantially upon the coast of India.

It may thus be said, briefly, that the notion of commerce being a peaceful profession is a modern fallacy, contradicted by historical fact When the traders had to take care of themselves, they fought on their own score and venture, with fleets and troops Afterwards, when the governments stepped in to help their respective Companies, the wars became national.

[1] 'Après quoi il serait très difficile aux autres puissances de contester aux Anglais cet empire de la mer auquel ils ont de tout temps aspiré, et dont aujourd'hui ils se montrent si avides qu'on peut dire que ce dessein et celui de s'emparer de tout le commerce du monde sont les deux véritables causes de toutes les querelles qu'ils suscitent aux dits États' Louis XIV to his ambassadors (April, 1665)

CHAPTER II

INFLUENCE AND CONNEXION OF POLITICS IN EUROPE AND ASIA (1660-1700)

SECTION I *State of Affairs in Europe*

IN the last quarter of the seventeenth century, the three maritime peoples of the West – the English, Dutch, and French—had manifestly entered the lists of competition for commercial ascendancy in Asiatic waters, while Spain and Portugal had fallen far into the rear, their sea power was broken, they kept their colonies, but they had lost their commerce The English Company's establishments in the East Indies consisted at this time of the Presidency of Bantam, with Macassar and other places in the Indian Archipelago; Fort St. George and its dependent factories on the Coromandel Coast and in the Bay of Bengal, and on the west coast of Bombay, Surat, with subordinate posts on that side of India [1].

It is of primary importance, in order to set in clear light the earlier subsequent stages of the rise of British dominion, and to explain why England finally distanced other competitors in this long and eventful race, that the vicissitudes of European politics in the latter part of this century should be briefly touched upon, because the success of England in the East is largely due to the mistakes of France and the misfortunes of

[1] Birdwood, *Report on Old Records*. There were also some places in the Persian Gulf

Holland in the West. From the beginning of the century the Eastern trade had been a makeweight and a perceptible element in the regulation of our policy abroad, for the London merchants had never been without means of influencing the Court or the Parliament; but the adjustment of this important national interest to the varying exigencies of the general situation in Europe had about this time become peculiarly difficult. During the interval between the Restoration (1660) and the Revolution (1688), when our commerce increased and throve mightily, we had to make head in Asia against the jealous antagonism of the Dutch; while in Europe the Dutch were our natural allies against the arbitrary aggressiveness of France. In the East it was of vital importance to our commerce that the power of Holland should be repressed, in the West we were vitally interested in upholding it; the balance of trade in Asia was inconsistent with the balance of politics in Europe It was remarked by a contemporary diplomatist that England's problem was to keep the peace with Holland without losing our East India trade, for if we supported the Dutch against France they went on elbowing us out of Asia; while in joining France against Holland we were breaking down one maritime power only to make room for another that might become much more formidable. The organization of the French navy had now been seriously taken up, and in 1664 was founded the French East India Company, which in 1665 had fitted out a squadron for the East Indies. In 1672, when England and France were allied against Holland, a French armament under De la Haye sailed for India, occupied the excellent harbour of Trincomalee in Ceylon, and took possession of St. Thomé, close to Madras.

The English could not decently oppose the emissaries of a friendly nation, although this first appearance of the French on the Coromandel coast—where in the next century our contest with them was fought out—could not but excite considerable uneasiness. Nor was the situation much improved in our favour when both places were subsequently captured from the French by the Dutch.

The foreign relations of England at this period were unsettled and curiously complicated In 1665 Holland and England were at war, in 1666 France joined Holland against us; but in 1668 England, Holland, and Sweden had formed the Triple Alliance against France; while in 1672 France and England combined to attack Holland, and in 1678 the English again made a defensive league with Holland against France[1]. The motives for these rapid changes of attitude were largely connected with Asiatic commerce

The three wars against Holland into which England drifted during the seventeenth century (between 1652 and 1672) were all prompted, more or less, by commercial and colonial animosities. For the quarrel in Cromwell's time had arisen directly out of grievances against the Dutch in Asia; and we have seen that their determined attempts to thwart and repel the expansion of English commerce in the East Indies produced the rupture of 1665. France joined Holland in 1666, when some desperate naval engagements ensued, until the invasion of Spanish Flanders by Louis XIV so alarmed the Dutch, that they consented to pacific proposals from

[1] It may be noticed, as showing the strength, even at this early time, of the English Company, that they were required by the Government to send out a large body of men to defend Bombay; they also employed an armed fleet of some thirty-five vessels.

the English, and signed the Treaty of Breda[1], upon the basis of *Uti possidetis* as to territory, and the amicable adjustment of all commercial disputes. England also made peace with France, but as Louis XIV nevertheless pushed on his invasion of Spanish Flanders, the Triple Alliance was formed to stop him by insisting on France and Spain coming to some arrangement. Then followed a fresh shuffle of the cards, for in 1670 the French and English kings agreed, by their secret treaty of Dover, to make a joint attack upon the Dutch. It is a mistake to suppose, as is commonly thought, that Charles II was induced to join France in 1672 merely by French bribes and his sympathy with Roman Catholicism. His alliance with France was undoubtedly aimed against civil and religious liberty at home, but abroad one of its objects was to cut down the naval and commercial growth of Holland, with whom we had many unsettled quarrels both in America and in Asia. By a secret treaty projected between France, England, and Portugal in 1673, the three powers were to send a joint naval expedition against the Dutch possessions in Asia, which were to be seized and divided among the allies. It is thus clear that there were strong and recurrent motives for hostility between the two nations, closely connected with Asiatic affairs[2]. Even Sir William Temple, the negotiator of the Triple Alliance, discusses in one of his essays the question whether we should derive greater advantage than France from the ruin of Holland. Whether in that case we could manage to bring over to England the Dutch trade and shipping, seems to him doubtful; yet he fears that, unless England joins France against Holland, the two continental States

[1] 1667.

[2] 'Us they distrust, Spain they despise, Holland they hate.' Letter of Marquis de Ruvigny, French Ambassador in England, 1672, to his own government.

might combine against England. In 1671, accordingly, England did join France in a war which ended, so far as we were concerned, in 1674, when the Dutch agreed to salute the English flag in the narrow seas, and to refer to arbitration all commercial differences. Louis XIV, on the other hand, went on capturing town after town on the Flemish border; his great armies were overrunning Holland, and the Prince of Orange had declared that he would die in the last ditch. Finally, when the English had made a defensive treaty with Holland to save her from ruin, a general peace was ratified at Nimeguen in 1678, on terms very favourable to France, who retained many of the barrier towns in the Netherlands.

The upshot of these long continental wars was manifestly to strengthen England and to weaken Holland. In 1677, when the French invasion had thrown the Dutch into peril and distress, the commerce of England was prospering wonderfully.[1] Moreover, the truce of 1678 was soon broken by fresh hostilities; and from that time up to the end of the century the French king had become entirely engrossed in his ambitious and extravagant wars, while the Dutch were fighting desperately for their existence; so that the only two maritime powers from which England had anything to fear in the East were entangled in a great struggle on the European Continent. From these contests Holland emerged, at the Peace of Ryswick (1697), with enfeebled strength, with her commerce severely damaged, and with her resources for distant expeditions materially reduced. But the Dutch had done much injury to the earliest French settlements planted under Colbert's auspices in

[1] 'The king,' says Brisbane in a letter to the Earl of Danby, hath 'succeeded in the improvement of trade and navigation beyond the hopes of those who talked of it seventeen years ago . . and now the trade of England is at such a height, that it is hard to think it can continue so, as it was hard to believe once it would ever rise to it.' June 25, 1677. Danby's *Letters*, 315.

the East Indies; and France had been so much occupied on the land, particularly when the fortune of war began to turn against her, that she was now incapacitated from pursuing Colbert's wise and far-reaching schemes of commercial and colonial expansion. Her naval development was checked; her maritime enterprise took no fresh flight until after the Peace of Utrecht[1]. In short the French and Dutch had mutually disabled each other, to the great advantage, for operations beyond sea, of the English, who thenceforward begin to draw slowly but continuously to the foremost place in Asiatic conquest and commerce

From this period of great continental wars in Europe we may date the beginning of substantial prosperity for our East Indian trade, for it was then that the English made good their footing on the Indian coasts. We learn from Macaulay's History that during the twenty years succeeding the Restoration, the value of the annual imports from Bengal alone rose from £8,000 to £300,000, and that the gains of the Company from their monopoly of the import of East Indian produce were almost incredible In 1685 the headquarters of their business on the Western side was transferred from Surat to Bombay; in 1687 the chief Bengal agency was removed from Hooghly to Calcutta, and Madras had become their central post on the eastern shores of the Indian peninsula The Company were liberally encouraged by the government of the two last Stuart kings, who granted ample charters, and even despatched armed reinforcements to their settlements. After the establishment of these three principal stations—which became afterwards, as Presidency towns, the cardinal points where the British dominion was first fixed and whence it issued out into spacious radiation—the East India Company resolved, in 1687, to assume indepen-

[1] 1712.

their jurisdiction within their own settlements, to fortify them, to coin money, to collect customs, to act, in short, as a self-governing body within their own limits. They now began to enlist a native militia for the purpose of using their chartered right of protecting themselves by reprisals against oppression or direct attack, and of fighting for their own hand in quarrels with the local governors or petty chiefs. In the new system thus introduced was contained the germ out of which these scattered trading settlements eventually expanded into wide territorial dominion; and the incipient weakness of the Moghul empire furnished both the motives and the opportunity for the change.

Section II. *State of Affairs in India.*

So long as the imperial administration prevailed up to the limits of its furthest Indian provinces, and was effectively felt on either seaboard, the English merchants were quite satisfied with licences allowing them to compound for the export duties, with grants of land for building their factories, and with other privileges for which they paid readily while they got their money's worth. But the outlying possessions of the empire were now no longer peacefully subordinate The Maratha chief Sivaji was ranging about the Dekhan [1], invading the Carnatic, and dominating the whole upper line of the west coast, not excluding the seaports and settlements held by Europeans In 1664 he had pillaged Surat, where the English factory was bravely and successfully defended by Sir George Oxenden; and in 1671 he had levied heavy contributions from Surat and the Portuguese colony. Nor could the Moghul governors give any trustworthy protection, for Aurangzeb's attention

[1] The Dekhan is the great central region of the Indian peninsula. The Vindhya range of hills and the Nerbudda river may be taken as marking roughly its northern limit.

was distracted by a revolt in Afghanistan, which after a long and arduous campaign he was totally unable to put down. When he returned to the Dekhan, he found his enemies stronger than before in the field. After Sivaji's death in 1680 his son Sambaji continued the revolt, the imperial armies were gradually worn out by incessant warfare, by futile pursuits of an enemy that always avoided a decisive blow, and by the disorganization of the central government caused by the emperor's long absence from his capital upon distant campaigns Aurangzeb had destroyed the Mahomedan kingdoms of Golkhonda and Bijapur in southern India, which might at any rate have served as breakwaters against the spread of the Maratha insurrection, and the war was now becoming epidemic The dislocation of the native administration led to the consolidation of the foreign settlements, since the Companies were compelled for their self-preservation to act upon this opportunity of taking up a more independent position in the country The relaxation of the supreme legitimate authority loosened its hold of the more distant governorships, and with local irresponsibility came local oppression. The merchants became exposed to irregular extortion and capricious ransoming by subordinate officials who could give them no valid guarantees or regular safeguard, while their immunities and privileges, even when obtained at the capital from the emperor's ministers, were often disregarded with impunity at the seaports

In these circumstances the English Company convinced themselves, after much anxious discussion, that the success and comparative security of the Dutch as formerly of the Portuguese, had been founded on their practice of seizing and openly fortifying posts strong enough to render the holders independent of the imperial pleasure, and to resist the arbitrary exac-

tions of neighbouring officials or potentates. Their assumed jurisdiction was still to be entirely confined to the sea-coast, and its object went no further than the security of their trade But the English soon discovered that the time had not yet come when a foreign flag could be safely set up on the Indian mainland. The Portuguese had established themselves at Goa before the Moghul empire had extended to the west coast, the Dutch had fixed their independent settlements for the most part upon islands In the seventeenth century the power of the Moghul emperor, although undermined, was not yet so far reduced that he could be defied with impunity on his own seaboard. When, in 1687, the East India Company ventured to declare war against the emperor Aurangzeb, all the English settlements soon found themselves placed in great jeopardy by this rashness It was lucky for the foreigners that the capture and execution of Sambaji, the Maratha leader, roused the Hindus of the south-west country to unite in strenuous revolt against the fanatic Mahomedan sovereign, who thereafter became too deeply entangled in the meshes of guerilla warfare and sporadic insurrections to find leisure for dealing thoroughly with comparatively insignificant mercantile intruders Moreover, since the Moghul government maintained no regular navy, it could not keep up a blockade of the harbours and river estuaries or bar the entry of foreign ships, while on the other hand the imperial customs revenue suffered heavily from their hostility

There are two cardinal points in the history of India during the sixteenth century, from which one might draw lines of causes and consequences that, when prolonged through the three next centuries, converge and meet in the climax of the establishment of the British Empire. The first is the acquisition by an

European nation, the Portuguese, for the first time in the world's history, of a territorial footing on the Indian mainland. The second point is the foundation of the Moghul empire by the chief of a Tartar tribe from beyond the Oxus. The European forced his entry into India by sea only a few years before the Moghul made his final and successful invasion by land; for Albuquerque took Goa in 1510, and in 1525 the Moghul empire was founded by the brilliant audacity and warlike skill of Báber, a Chagatai Tartar, who with an army of 12,000 men overthrew the dominion of the Pathán kings at Delhi, and subdued all the northern provinces of India The emperor Aurangzeb (better known in India by his title of Álamgír) was the last able representative of a dynasty that had conquered and ruled in India from the middle of the sixteenth century. It had been consolidated and raised to a full height of splendour and power by Akbar, a contemporary of Queen Elizabeth Four successive emperors reigned 151 years, from Akbar's accession in 1556 to Aurangzeb's death in 1707, and as in Asia a long reign is always a strong reign, for a century and a half the Moghul was fairly India's master The dynasty was foreign by descent and habits, the strength of the government was sustained by constant importation of fresh blood from abroad, the military and civil chiefs were mainly vigorous recruits from Central Asia who took service under the Indian sovereigns of their own race and religion. Akbar and his two successors were politic rulers who allied themselves with the princely families of the Hindus, respected up to a certain point the prejudices of the population, and kept both civil and religious despotism within reasonable bounds. The Emperors Jehángir and Shah Jehán were both sons of Hindu mothers; but Aurangzeb, the son of Shah Jehán, and the fourth in descent from Akbar,

was a Mahomedan by full parentage, and a bigoted fanatic by temperament; and after his triumph in the great civil war that broke out among the sons of Shah Jehan, he launched out into a career of fanatic persecution and ambitious territorial aggrandisement. In the writings of Francois Bernier, a Frenchman who was Court Physician to the Moghul emperor toward the beginning of Aurangzeb's long reign, may be found an excellent picture of the condition of the empire at that period. His book contains a lively sketch of contemporary history, and is full of striking observations upon the system of government, the composition of the army, and the more prominent features of Indian society and administration. Perhaps the most valuable part of it is the letter 'Concerning Hindusthan,' which Bernier wrote, after his return to France, to Colbert, the celebrated minister of Louis XIV, who had just set on foot the French East India Company that became our formidable rival in the eighteenth century His description of the military and official classes is instructive—

'The great Moghul,' he says, 'is a foreigner in Hindusthan; consequently he finds himself in a hostile country, or nearly so, containing hundreds of Gentiles (Hindus) to one Moghul or even to one Mahomedan. ... The court itself does not now consist as originally, of real Moghuls, but is a medley of Usbegs, Persians, Arabs, and Turks, or descendants from all these people.'

'It must not be imagined,' he elsewhere observes, 'that the Omrah or Lords of the Moghul's court are members of ancient families, as our nobility in France ... they mostly consist of adventurers from different nations, who entice one another to the court, and are generally persons of low descent, some having been originally slaves. The Moghul raises them to dignity or degrades them to obscurity according to his own pleasure and caprice.'

Bernier goes on to show that the total insecurity of all private property, land revenue exactions, instability of government, the denial of justice, the tyranny and cupidity of the sovereign and his subordinates, 'a tyranny often so excessive as to deprive the peasant and artisan of the necessaries of life, that drives the cultivator of the soil from his wretched home,' and that was ruining agriculture—accounted abundantly for the rapid decadence of all Asiatic States[1] 'It is owing,' he says, 'to this miserable system that most towns in Hindusthan are made up of earth, mud, and other wretched materials, that there is no city or town which, if it be not already ruined or deserted, does not bear evident marks of approaching decay' He touches, in this manner, upon the symptoms, already perceptible to a close observer, of the empire's political and economical decline

Soon after the date at which Bernier wrote, Aurangzeb entered upon the interminable wars in South India which gradually involved him in the misfortunes and difficulties that darkened the last years of his reign. He succeeded in upsetting the minor Mahomedan kingdoms which had been strong enough to hold down the Hindu population, but he had in fact weakened his empire by extending it, for the new southern provinces could not be effectively managed at a distance from the central authority, and the Hindus were not only provoked by his fanaticism, but encouraged by his inability to control them. The Moghul government, moreover, had never paid much attention to its sea frontier, being quite unaccustomed to expect foreign enemies or in-

[1] 'The country is ruined by the necessity of defraying the enormous charges required to maintain the splendour of a numerous court, and to pay a large army maintained for the purpose of keeping the people in subjection. *No adequate idea can be conveyed of the sufferings of that people*'—Bernier

truders from any other quarter than the north-west, through the Afghan passes The only naval force on the Indian coast belonged to the Siddhis, an independent Abyssinian colony, whose chiefs occasionally placed their fleet at the disposal of Aurangzeb for employment on the west side of the Indian peninsula

To these causes and favouring circumstances, therefore, to the incipient decline of the central sovereignty, to the relaxation of imperial authority on the outskirts of the dominion, and especially to the commotion caused by the spread of the Hindu rebellion under energetic Maratha leaders, we may attribute the facility with which the English made good their foothold on the shores of India toward the close of the seventeenth century

It is important, moreover, to remember that at the time when the mistakes and troubles of the Moghul empire were opening the gates of India to access from the sea, there set in an era of war in Europe which for many years disabled or diverted the resources of England's two maritime rivals, France and Holland The reigns of the two autocratic monarchs who ruled France and India throughout the second half of the seventeenth century tally very nearly in point of time, for the dates of their respective accessions to actual rulership very nearly coincide, and they died early in the eighteenth century within a few years of each other In the policy to which each of these celebrated rulers personally attached himself, and in its unfortunate consequences, there is also much more than a fanciful resemblance The accession of both Aurangzeb and Louis XIV took place at a moment when the splendour and fame of their dynasties were in full lustre; they both inaugurated a career of conquest and unscrupulous attacks upon weaker neighbours that was at first triumphant, they both gradually undermined the prosperity of their kingdoms and the stability of their houses by wasteful and impolitic wars.

Fanatic religious persecution of their own subjects, unwieldy centralization of all governmental authority, the levelling of local institutions, widespread corruption, and a magnificent court under the influence of bigots, lackeys, and panders, were characteristics of the reign of the Bourbon as well as of the Moghul. And in each instance half a century's autocratic misrule, complicated by unfortunate foreign wars, sectarian revolts, and grinding fiscal oppression, brought great misery on the people, and fatally enervated the monarchy Toward the end of the seventeenth century the clouds began to gather, and from the beginning of the eighteenth century the fortunes of both sovereigns were perceptibly on the wane. It so happened that the decline, or eclipse, of each power was eminently favourable to the rising commercial ascendancy of the English nation. In 1691 King William formed the grand alliance of the Germanic States and of the maritime powers, England, Holland, and Spain, against France, whereby the preponderance of the French was checked, and their schemes of colonial and commercial expansion were thrown aside or trampled down in a great European war. For although the Peace of Ryswick suspended hostilities for a few years, it may be said that during the whole period from 1690 to 1713, the French monarchy was engaged in conflicts with all its European neighbours on a vast scale of ruinous expenditure.

The condition of the Moghul empire was even worse. We have seen that during the seventeenth century, so long as the Moghul empire retained its vigour, it was found impossible for any foreign adventurers to obtain more than a precarious footing, by sufferance, on the mainland of India But when the eighteenth century opened, the disorder of the imperial government was manifestly culminating to a climax. The great age of Aurangzeb, the persistence and contagious spread of

the Hindu revolt against his oppression; the certainty that his death would be the signal for civil war among his sons, and that the succession must abide the chance of battle; financial distress and the visible loosening of his administration everywhere—these were the ordinary symptoms of debility, decay, and approximate dissolution in an Oriental dynasty. In the north-west the Persians and the rebellious Afghan tribes had now wrested from Aurangzeb his border strongholds; his grasp on that all-important frontier had become insecure, and the high roads from central Asia were again open to invaders. In the south-west the Moghul, after putting down the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkhonda, had been unable to reconstruct an administration strong enough to repress the turbulent elements that his impolitic demolitions had set free The disbanded soldiery, the plundered peasants, the disaffected Hindu landholders, all rallied round the standard of the Maratha captains, who bribed or daunted the imperial officials, harried the districts, cut off the revenue, and defeated the Moghul forces in detail. During the last twenty-four years (1683–1707) of Aurangzeb's long reign, he was commanding his armies in person on the south-western borders of his empire, until he died at Ahmadnagar in his eighty-ninth year. No two rulers could be less alike in character than Aurangzeb and Marcus Aurelius, yet one is reminded of the Roman emperor expiring in his Pannonian camp after fourteen years of incessant frontier warfare, when the Parthians were threatening his eastern provinces and the barbarian tribes were tiring out his legions on the Danube. All these internal troubles were evident symptoms of the empire's impending disruption, and the precursors of a great political change.

CHAPTER III

CONSOLIDATION OF THE ENGLISH EAST INDIA COMPANY (1690—1702)

SECTION I *Condition and importance of the East Indian trade*

IN India the last years of the seventeenth century had been for the English East India Company a period of not untroubled transition from a purely commercial system toward a kind of elementary local self-government The increasing weakness of the Moghul empire doubled the risks and uncertainty of their trade, producing constant alarms from the fighting that went on near their settlements, liability to plunder and incessant exactions, exposure to interference from interlopers, and danger of encroachment or attack from European rivals They had now deliberately adopted the plan of endeavouring to rid themselves of dependence on the native authorities, and their agents were enjoined to spare no pains for improving their revenue. 'The increase of our revenue,' they wrote in 1690, 'is the subject of our care as much as our trade, t'is that must maintain our force when twenty accidents may interrupt our trade, t'is that must make us a nation in India. . . and upon this account it is that the wise Dutch, in all their general advices that we have seen, write ten paragraphs concerning their government, their civil and military policy, warfare, and the increase of their revenue,

for one paragraph they write concerning trade." Their purpose was now (to use their own words) to establish "such a Politie of civil and military power, and create and secure such a large revenue, as may be the foundation of a large, well grounded, sure English dominion in India for all time to come [1]" These instructions shew that, to use an Oriental metaphor, the scent of dominion was already in the nostrils of the English Company, that they were by this time on the track of higher game than the profits of trade, and that they were gradually concentrating their operations upon the Indian mainland. At Madras and Bombay their fortifications were in fair condition, although their troops, beside a few Europeans, were chiefly a rabble of Armenians, Arabs, negroes, and half-bred Portuguese. In Bengal the imperial viceroy, being himself hard pressed, had permitted their agent to fortify Calcutta, where Fort William was named after the reigning King of England. In 1687, having resolved to bring all their settlements under a regulated administration, the Company had fitted out a large armament at home, had obtained King James' authority for their governor to make peace and war in India, and had sent out Sir John Child with orders to levy against the Moghul government a war of reprisals for damages and insults suffered from the native officials That government, however, though it was in a bad plight, had still power and pride sufficient for turning fiercely upon such assailants. In western India the Company's attempt to defy the imperial authority brought them to considerable discomfiture, for Aurangzeb himself was encamped at no great distance with his main army. At Bombay, where the force is reported to have consisted of fifteen European

[1] Letter to Fort St. George, Dec. 12, 1687.

soldiers in addition to a raw native militia, the governor was actually besieged in his own town and castle, and the place was reduced to awkward straits by the fleet of the Abyssinian Siddhi. The expedition against Bengal and the north-eastern coast totally failed; the factories were attacked and had to be temporarily abandoned. Orders were issued by the emperor to expel the English from Madras, where the President, having only a few English soldiers in garrison with some half-caste Portuguese, lost heart on hearing that a Moghul force was moving southward. Sir John Child, who impersonated the war policy of the Company, died in 1690, and the business ended rather ignominiously with the issue by Aurangzeb of a lofty Order reciting that on receipt of an humble submissive petition by the English His Majesty had mercifully pardoned their transgressions. At this message the Company's directors at home professed high indignation, for no petition of that kind had been sent, but the moment was not opportune for prosecuting the quarrel.

During the next ten years, however, the difficulties and decadence of the Moghul empire were manifestly on the increase. One of Aurangzeb's sons invaded India from Persia with a foreign army, and the important provinces or kingdoms of South India—the Dekhan, Mysore, the Carnatic—were barely kept in obedience by large forces, for the great age of Aurangzeb held all India in fear and expectation of imminent change. All this instability of affairs compelled the foreign settlements to rely more and more upon their own resources for self-defence against arbitrary officials, rebel leaders, marauding banditti, and, finally, against each other. For war had been raging in Europe from 1690 to 1697; the French had been doing enormous damage to our home-

ward bound ships, having on one occasion captured a whole fleet of merchantmen; nor did the Dutch, though our faithful allies in Europe, relax their inveterate jealousy of our progress in Asia.

That the vast importance of our Eastern trade was already realized to its full extent at the end of the seventeenth century, is abundantly shown by the writings of Sir Charles Davenant, the chief commercial authority of his day[1] He observes that under the Tudor dynasty England had enjoyed great internal prosperity for a hundred years, and that the Dutch had soon found themselves too many for the narrow territory of their republic, whereby both nations were driven into foreign trade by an increasing population On the other hand, he says, the French people had diminished during the long religious wars of the sixteenth century; so that the two Protestant nations could push on vigorously to their forward place in the commerce beyond seas In his essay on the East Indian Trade, Davenant enlarges further upon the great profits and political advantages that accrued to England from her position in the East Indies, upon the strength of Holland in that quarter, and upon the extreme impolicy of allowing the Dutch to acquire such predominance as would enable them to put down all rivalry Of the East India trade he says—*Whatever country can be in the full possession of it will give law to all the commercial world.* He declares that if we should lose our hold in India, we should let go half our foreign business, and he insists on the point that by losing the trade we should be entirely deprived of the dominion of the sea, 'for only foreign trade can maintain a great fleet' He describes the 'formidable power' of Holland in the East Indies,

[1] Born 1656, died 1714.

the immense capital that they had spent in raising and consolidating it; the forts and castles well provided and garrisoned; their large fleet; their good harbours; the energy, wealth, and unity of the Dutch Company, which was an incorporation of the seven chambers of the seven Provinces, almost coeval in origin with the State itself, counting among its numbers all the ablest and best heads in the country. He shows that if we should abandon the traffic, the Dutch would undoubtedly enjoy the whole, when England must be content thereafter to trade under their protection and flag. In such an event he calculates that an entire monopoly of East Indian goods would bring Holland yearly more treasure than could be got from Peru and Mexico, that they might earn a revenue of six million sterling; that this great increase of wealth would entirely turn against us the balance of naval preponderance, which would certainly prove our ruin if (as was at the time not impossible) the Dutch provinces should fall under the ascendancy of France If, on the other hand, the English bestir themselves and prevail over Holland, 'if our foreign business were enlarged to the utmost extent of which it is capable, *we should thereby acquire such wealth and power as that England with its proper forces might be able to deal with any nation whatsoever*;' she might even become, like Rome, the head of a vast dominion, the fountain of law, the spring of power, honours, and offices throughout an immense territory.'

Let us take, again, another and much more celebrated contemporary authority, Leibnitz, who in 1672 presented to Louis XIV his *Consilium Aegyptiacum*, which was a long State paper urgently advising the king to seize and annex Egypt. His main argument is that the possession of Egypt would secure to France the command of

invaluable Eastern trade, whereby she could easily ruin Holland by cutting off the sources of her wealth and naval power, and would be enabled to build up a maritime empire for herself. As Louis XIV was at that time preparing to attack the Dutch, Leibnitz points out that to break down their preponderance in the East Indies would be a far surer way toward subduing them than an invasion of Holland, and he proceeds to throw out some very remarkable suggestions in regard to the facility of establishing a great Asiatic dominion. No one can doubt, he says, that if the Portuguese could have employed larger forces in their earlier expeditions they would have brought all India under their sway, for the whole of Asia is more easily conquerable than Germany, and the French king needs only the strength and riches that can be drawn from Asiatic commerce to become the supreme arbiter of European affairs[1].

Such views and arguments as these, emanating from men of the highest reputation and experience in commerce and politics, serve to explain what kind of prize it was over which the maritime nations of the world had been contending, and for which the English were now entering the list as competitors. This prize, these writers insist, is of inestimable value, and, what is more, can be won by the European power that strikes boldly and skilfully for Asiatic dominion The writings of Leibnitz and Davenant may be read as a useful corrective of the inveterate habit, from which even English historians are not always free, of regarding the development of our Indian empire out of a few scattered trading ports as a marvellous phenomenon, quite unforeseen and almost

[1] 'Pour devenir l'arbitre des affaires il ne manque au roi que d'acquérir [illegible] maritime et d'être en possession des échanges maritimes' [illegible] vol. v, 275 (Foucher de Careil).

inexplicable. It is worth while to point out the superficiality of this commonplace view, and to lay stress on the evidence available to prove that our success could be naturally explained, could indeed have been to a large degree predicted. Our dominion grew out of much stronger and deeper roots than is usually supposed. To understand its true origin we must remember that our settlements on the Indian mainland were valuable not only as emporia for the very profitable trade in the exchange of goods between India and Europe, but also because they were the fixed points upon which the whole commerce of England with South Asia, from the Persian Gulf eastward to Sumatra, Java, and Spice Islands as far as the China seas, may be said to have pivoted; they kept open and were indeed indispensable for the communications along the line of what was then the richest sea-borne traffic in the world. For the nation that could engross that traffic held the whole carrying trade between Asia and Western Europe, and supplied all the adjacent European countries. Upon the wealth and multiplied force acquired in extending, step by step, their influence over this wide range of operations, upon the gradual strengthening in English hands of the foundations that supported this commanding position, were built up the first stages of English ascendancy in the East. The constitution of these great commercial associations resembled in many respects that of the proprietary Colonies which laid the foundation of such States as Maryland and Pennsylvania in North America[1]. The

[1] 'The united proprietary representative sovereignty of the lands of Bengal is virtually in right, possession, fact, and relative circumstances, but on a large imperial scale, almost precisely what private territorial property was in some provinces of North America, with

proprietary bodies appointed the governor and council, and were in fact invested with a kind of autonomy under the general authority of the Sovereign; they had many of the attributes, without much of the responsibility, of dependent States. It had become abundantly clear that this organization of a Chartered Company, with powers of internal control and self-defence, possessing in some degree the resources, administrative traditions, the unity of plan and purpose, the larger interests and relative responsibilities of a local government—was necessary to the existence of the English commerce in Asia, where we had then no diplomatic representatives, and many dangerous rivals. The long contest throughout the seventeenth century between England and Holland in the East Indies, was destined to terminate in a kind of partition of that vast commercial domain. Not until the nineteenth century was a final political settlement accomplished, yet the first approaches toward this end were already perceptible in the tendency of English enterprise to converge, as we have said, upon India itself, while the Dutch were visibly drawing off and collecting their strength toward Java and Sumatra. Beyond the Straits of Malacca they were still predominant, the headquarters of their administration were at Batavia; and they had seized, in 1683 the valuable position of Bantam in Java which gave them a virtual monopoly of the trade in pepper, the most valuable commodity from those regions. The English Company had before them the example of the Dutch, who had adopted from the Portuguese the policy of making their settlements self-protective by fortifications and strong

respect to local or more extensive national interests of the high ruling protecting State of Great Britain, and differing only in the descriptive terms of conquered and colonised dependencies.'—Grant's *Analysis*.

garrisons, of acquiring territory, and of [illegible] acquisitions, not as grants held by traders [illegible] from the nearest Oriental potentate, but as [illegible] held under direct or delegated authority from the sovereign European power. They saw that they could only maintain their ground by imitating this example; and henceforward their establishments were more and more framed and directed upon this model.

SECTION II. *The United East India Company.*

But in London the enormous profits of the Company were exciting jealousy and stimulating energetic attempts to break in upon such a magnificent treasure house. Sir Josiah Child, who then ruled their affairs autocratically, had enlisted the favour and support of the Court by presents to King James II and to all who had influence at Whitehall. Unluckily the India House had just set its sails upon the Tory tack when a Protestant wind brought over William III, and after the Revolution of 1688 a new Company was formed to compete for the next Charter upon a remodelled system. In 1693 the old Company's Charter was declared void for non-payment of a five per cent. duty laid by the Crown on their capital stock, and it was only [illegible] upon condition of its being terminable at three years' notice. Then in 1698 the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Montague, being hard pressed for money, passed an Act of Parliament granting a Royal Charter to the new Company, who undertook to lend two millions to the government at eight per cent.[1] The money was [illegible]

[1] John Evelyn notes in his Diary (March 7, 1698) that the old Company lost their business against the new Company by [illegible] in Parliament, so many of their friends being absent, going to see a tiger baited by dogs. This must refer to some early stage [illegible]

subscribed with an eagerness that proved the country's wealth, and its confidence in the strength and expansive power of this great branch of the national trade.

The appearance in India of a second and rival Company created serious internal complications. Each association did its utmost to ruin the other; each hoisted the English flag and sent an embassy to contend for the Moghul emperor's patronage at his court; while the local governors played off one against the other, favouring each Company alternately, and taking bribes impartially from both. This discreditable and damaging contest was at last closed by the union of the two Companies, which was effected through Godolphin's intervention in 1702, just before the great war of the Spanish succession began, and immediately after the accession of Queen Anne[1]. The effect of this measure was to concentrate all the enterprise, capital, and maritime experience of one powerful corporation upon the consolidation of our position in south Asia. The East India Company, by whom our Indian affairs were administered for the next 155 years, were now backed by the most opulent city and the largest seafaring population in the world, by the favour of the English government, to whom they made liberal advances, and by the increasing influence of the commercial classes upon the

proceedings, for Macaulay says that the Bill passed the Commons by 125 votes to 78 on June 26, and the Lords on July 5, of that year.

[1] Death of William III, March 1702. Union of the two companies, [illegible] 1702. Declaration of war against France, May 1702. 'A con[illegible] writer, the Marquis de Feuquières, observes that in joining [illegible] against France and Spain in 1702, England and Holland were [illegible] actuated by commercial motives. They feared that, if French [illegible] became paramount in Spain, France, already powerful at sea, [illegible] meditating wide projects of colonial expansion, would be [illegible] to destroy English and Dutch commerce in the East [illegible]'—*Mémoires*, chap. 1. p. 16.

politics of the country. With these advantages, with a secure base and headquarters at home, with fortified settlements and armed shipping abroad, with a Charter authorizing them to raise troops and to make war and peace in India, the Company were already capable of defending themselves and even of pushing forward their outposts against any opposition that could be made by the Viceroys of a distracted Oriental empire.

The history of Venice and Genoa had already shown what might be achieved by the power of armed commerce in the hands of small communities greatly superior in wealth and civilization to their neighbours. These towns had grown into independent States by successful monopoly of the Asiatic trade in the European waters; they were originally no stronger than a chartered English Company of the seventeenth century. The decadence of the Byzantine empire enabled the Italian cities to supplant the Greeks in the Levant, to acquire and fortify the islands and other points of vantage along the coasts, and thus to seize trade and territory in the Mediterranean very much as the Dutch and English established themselves in the Indian seas. Chios belonged entirely to a Genoese Company, whose rule for 220 years over several islands of the Greek archipelago bears a curious likeness, in miniature, to the territorial domination of the English East India Company. The ruins of strongholds and other signs of extinct Italian dominion are to be seen all along the shores of Greece and Asia Minor like the relics of the Dutch and Portuguese settlements on the Indian Ocean or the Persian Gulf But neither Greeks nor Italians could resist the torrent of Asiatic conquest that came pouring across Asia from the East The Italian republics had not the population, capital, or territorial resources

sufficient for holding their scattered possessions against the fleets and armies of the Ottoman empire, their territory on the Italian mainland was constantly threatened by powerful neighbours; and the diversion of the Asiatic trade was drying up the springs of their prosperity. Nevertheless, when we consider how much was accomplished by these small trading States so long as the field lay open to them, and even while they were confronted by the Turkish power in its full strength on the mainland, we may moderate our astonishment at the fact that the foundations of a great empire in India could be laid by an English trading Company, at a time when the Moghul empire was rapidly waning, and England was waxing to the plenitude of her maritime supremacy. It is true that the Levant and Greece lay adjacent to Venice and Genoa, while between India and England lay six months of sea voyage. But this distance favoured the plantation of our dominion by keeping Indian affairs in the beginning outside the sphere of European politics, and latterly it became a distinct advantage to the nation that could give its commercial colonies a secure base at home, and could hold the sea against all rivals.

In this situation it might have been foreseen without much difficulty that as decay subsided into dilapidation all over the Moghul empire, the vigorous European settlements on the coasts of India would enlarge their borders and affirm their independence. When in 1672 Leibnitz advised Louis XIV not to attack Holland, but to seize Egypt as the stepping-stone to a great Asiatic dominion, he wrote, truly, that 'the extreme feebleness of the Orientals is no longer a secret', and India was now certainly the weakest, perhaps also still the wealthiest, part of South Asia. The quarrels and embarrassments of the local governors already pre-

vented them from paying much attention to trading factories, except when money was to be extorted or assistance needed. It was clearly as probable that the native usurpers and adventurers who were rising into power would seek aid from the Companies as that they would afford them protection or subject them to control; they were more likely, in this manner, to throw open India to the foreigner than to bar the doors against him. From such circumstances two consequences might be fairly inferred; first, that the power of the foreign Companies would steadily expand so long as they could rely on their communications with Europe; secondly, that commercial jealousies in Asia and national antipathies in Europe would before long bring the expanding Companies into collision with each other. Lastly, it might be predicted that whenever this collision should occur, the Company that succeeded in overthrowing its European antagonist would have little to fear from native adversaries, and would have attained an incontestable ascendancy in the adjoining provinces of India.

At the opening of the eighteenth century, therefore, the situation may be thus briefly indicated. The Dutch Company, still rich and prospering commercially, held Ceylon and some Indian stations, but the centre of their operations was slowly shifting further eastward, and as the century advanced their naval power declined rapidly[1]. The French Company had suffered heavily from the recent war in Europe, during which they had lost Pondicherry, and had only recovered it in 1697; they were deep in debt, and were altogether in no

[1] 'Le Gouvernement qui comptait, en 1671, 151 vaisseaux de guerre, n'en avait plus que 42 seulement en 1740' (Castonnet des Fosses, *La Rivalité de Dupleix et de la Bourdonnaye*, p. 14.)

condition for pushing forward enterprises in Asia. The English Company were flourishing, and had obtained a firm foothold on the Indian mainland, but the Moghul empire still held together under Aurangzeb, who would have tolerated no serious territorial encroachment.

Up to this time, therefore, the policy of the French and English had remained so far strictly commercial, that all their plans and proceedings for settling upon the Indian coasts were designed in the interests of trade. We are now approaching the period when the growing strength of their position, the weakness of the Indian governments, the increasing keenness and impulse of competition, and, above all, the violent quarrels between France and England in Europe, combined to transform the commercial rivalry into an armed contest for political ascendancy For some twenty years South India became a battlefield of two distant European nations; the war of succession in Austria was made a pretext for taking sides in a dispute over the heritage of the Nizâm of Hyderabad, and Indian affairs were entangled in the prolonged struggle between France and England for colonial and naval superiority When England at the close of that struggle was eventually left mistress of the situation, she found thrown wide open before her the gates leading to immense territorial possessions, and to the consolidation of an Asiatic dominion which is perhaps the most eminent and valuable legacy bequeathed to us by our forefathers in the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER IV

THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH EAST INDIA COMPANIES

SECTION I *State of India* (1707–1740)

THE death of the Spanish king in 1702 had been the signal for a war that ended with a partition of the Spanish monarchy and a general political resettlement of Europe So with the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 began the disruption of the Moghul empire, followed by a material disturbance of the political system of Asia The commotion and territorial derangements that were now spreading through the central regions of Asia were evident premonitory tokens of the instability and approaching downfall of the two great dynasties that had ruled Persia and India from the middle of the sixteenth century, the long stationary period was drawing to its end, an era of great conquests was reappearing, and with the troubles fermenting in central Asia we may undoubtedly connect the events about to follow on its outer edge, on the coast of the Indian Peninsula

The event of supreme importance in the history of India for this period is the total collapse of the Moghul empire about the middle of the eighteenth century It ended like other great Oriental despotisms, assaulted by foreign invaders from outside, and distracted by internal revolts, it fell with a crash, and was torn to fragments by usurpers, successful rebels, and military adventurers One fatal defect, probably, was over-centralization, the peculiar vice of absolute governments,

which inevitably leads to ruin whenever the personal power falls into feeble hands

There was nothing unusual in the civil war that broke out on the Moghul emperor's death, for the title to a vacant Indian throne was ordinarily determined by the sword, every ruler of the imperial house had fought in turn for his heritage, and in fact the dynasty had owed its strength to the severe competitive trials in which each successor had proved his capacity for kingship But as Aurangzeb died at a great age, the contest had been long foreseen and deliberately prepared for He left his dominions in confusion, with a formidable revolt spreading among the Marathas, his empire was unwieldy and overgrown, and this time the struggle among his heirs brought out no successor capable of holding together the ill-joined provinces and discordant races The freebooting companies of the Maratha chiefs soon developed into roving armies that overran the central and western regions The great Viceroyalty of the southern provinces was converted into an independent principality under the Nizam Bengal, the richest province of India, fell away under an Afghan adventurer, the Sikhs were rising in the Punjab, a powerful official was founding his dynasty in Oudh, and various usurpers were setting themselves up in the remoter districts The dominion which had been planted in the sixteenth century by the vigour and audacity of Baber and his tremendous from the Oxus was now subsiding into emasculate debility During the flourishing period of the Moghul empire its outpost were at Kabul and Kandahar, but towards the end of Aurangzeb's reign his garrisons had been driven out of Afghanistan As the maintenance of a strong north-west frontier has always been essential to the security of India, the

divorce of Afghanistan from the rulers [illegible] plains was in those days sure to be [illegible] recurrence of chronic invasions from [illegible] Thirty years after Aurangzeb's decease, [illegible] the Persian soldier of fortune who had overthrown [illegible] ruling dynasty in Persia, came down through the [illegible] passes with a great army. The Moghul [illegible] made but a show of resistance. Nádir Shah [illegible] Delhi[1], added one more massacre to the bloodstained annals of that ill-fated city, wrenched away from the imperial crown all its possessions west of the Indus, and departed home leaving the Moghul government, which had received its death-blow, in a state of [illegible] collapse The barriers having been thus broken down, Ahmed Shah, of the Abdallee tribe of the Afghans, followed two years later. When Nádir Shah had been assassinated by the Persians in his camp in Khorasán, Ahmed Shah, who commanded a large body of cavalry in Nádir Shah's army, rode off east-ward to conquer Afghanistan, and from that base he seized the whole Punjab between 1748 and 1751. Meanwhile from the south-west the Marathas were spreading over central India like a devastating flood; and wherever the land had been levelled flat by the steam roller of absolutism, wherever the minor rulerships and petty States had been crushed out by the empire, the whole country was now easily overrun and broken up into anarchy The different provinces and viceroyalties went their own natural way; they were parcelled out in a scuffle among revolted governors, rebellious chiefs, leaders of insurgent tribes or sects, religious revivalists, or captains of mercenary bands. The Indian people were becoming a [illegible] multitude swaying to and fro in the political [illegible]

[1] March, 1739.

[illegible] to any power, natural or supernatural, [illegible] likely to protect them. They were prepared [illegible] in the assumption of authority by any [illegible] could show himself able to discharge the most elementary functions of government in the preservation of life and property. In short, the people were [illegible] without a leader or protector; while the political system under which they had long lived was disappearing in complete disorganization.

SECTION II. *The French and English in South India* (1715–1749)

It was during this period of tumultuary confusion that the French and English first appeared as rivals upon the political arena in India For the purpose of throwing some additional light on the origin, character, and eventual results of the great transmarine contest between these two nations which stands in the forefront of their history during the eighteenth century, it may not be inappropriate, at this point, to sketch very briefly the earlier development of a commercial and colonial policy in France. This may at any rate lend readers some slight degree of aid towards substituting clear and well-founded conclusions for the complacent commonplaces that are so often repeated about the lack of national aptitudes for that kind of enterprise. It may also serve to bring out and accentuate the wide contrasts of principle and practice exhibited by the annals of French and English adventure beyond sea.

The history of French colonization is ordinarily divided, we are told, into three periods the period of the great discoveries, which is carried up to the death, [illegible] of Henry IV; the era of grand colonial expansion in the seventeenth century; and the period of [illegible] during the hundred years that intervene between

the Peace of Utrecht in 1713, and the end, in 1815, of the great French wars. We have seen that the rivalry among the maritime nations began in earnest at the end of the sixteenth century, when the splendid achievements and conquests of Spain and Portugal had fired the imagination of the whole western world The spreading curiosity in France about outlandish peoples, distant voyages, and the fabulous wealth of Asia, is illustrated by the writings of that age, and by constant allusions to the subject in such authors as Rabelais and Montaigne. Nevertheless, although at the opening of the seventeenth century commercial and colonizing projects had been already entertained by that active and far-sighted ruler Henry IV who projected a French East India Company, it was in England and Holland, not in France, that the first important step was taken by founding the two East India Companies that were destined to a long and memorable career In 1624, however, began the long ministry of Richelieu, in whose powerful mind the conception of endowing France with a great dominion beyond sea reached its maturity, and had issue in successive decrees for the foundation and multiplication of colonizing companies in various parts of the world, from Canada in the West to Madagascar and the East Indies.

It is worth observation that in the charters of these companies may be found the earliest promulgations of principles that were consistently maintained throughout the entire course of French colonization under the old monarchy, but which would be in vain looked for in the commercial records of England or Holland. The Roman Catholic faith was established, to the rigid exclusion of all other religions, but on the other hand converted pagans were to be admitted to the full civil rights of Frenchmen The propagation of Christianity was

placed upon a level with the plantation of colonies, as a direct object of these expeditions. Nevertheless their real motive was, after all, not so much economical or propagandist, as political, the companies were organized by the great cardinal to counteract the accumulation of vast transmarine possessions by Spain, then France's most dangerous rival, and in order that Spain might not claim for herself the whole non-Christian world In this policy, indeed, Richelieu was only imitating the tactics of England and Holland Both these nations were already striking at the extremities of the unwieldy Spanish empire, cutting off its gold convoys, harrying its coasts and islands, sweeping the narrow seas by privateers, and generally pursuing that irregular buccaneering warfare of which the memory long lived among mariners in the romantic traditions of the Spanish Main. In these wild adventures the French took little share, but they had borrowed from their neighbours the system of chartered associations; and under Mazarin as under Richelieu, the peopling of new lands beyond the ocean by French Catholics, in the interests of God, and as a balance against Spain, was the essential principle of colonial action in France during the first half of the seventeenth century

At this moment the religious idea was dominant in France. The court and all the fashionable society interested themselves warmly in collecting subscriptions for propagating the true faith among the heathen, missions were sent out, bishops were appointed, and the Jesuits began gradually to acquire great power in all the new colonies of North America Nor was officialism less active than ecclesiasticism in the direction and superintendence of these projects for the extension of the faith and dominion of France. The system of companies under Church and State patronage was not

popular among the men of business, who demanded of their Government no more than freedom of trade for themselves, and protection from foreign enemies. But official predilections were then, as they have always been in France, adverse to the English practice of chartering a body of pioneers or merchant adventurers, and leaving them to plant settlements or factories by their own resources The expeditions were not only authorized, but energetically promoted by the Government, with the result that the governing classes insisted on sharing the investment or taking their part in the speculations, with an eye to the benefits promised in this world and the next All the administrative and military commands were distributed among the noblesse, and among the hundred associates of the Company of New France we find thirty *seigneurs de la cour*, besides a certain number of ecclesiastic and even princely dignitaries, who are represented on the board by their secretaries

No chartered association for the single purpose of trade, like the English or Dutch East India Companies, was founded by Richelieu, nor could any such company have been launched upon the system that has been just described. The French mercantile community demurred to conditions which placed all these corporations so completely under the paternal supervision of priests, nobles, and high officials, they also betrayed a perverse mistrust of the religious and propagandist element. They cautiously suggested that in commercial transactions spiritual directorship and ministerial supervision are not altogether desirable The Chambers of Rouen and Marseilles recommended that at no price, and on no pretext, should the captains of their vessels be nominated by the king; they complained of French consuls abroad and revenue officers at home as equally dictatorial.

They asked that religious interests should not rule trading operations, but that their traffic should be protected at sea by the royal navy, and that trading factories should be allowed to manage their own affairs. It does not appear, in short, that Richelieu's colonial policy produced any notable results, beyond some remarkable voyages of discovery which gave a considerable impulse to all future colonization, and a great diffusion of missionary literature reporting the successful propagation of the faith in those countries that had been made over to the new companies

We may thus register, even at this early stage, observations of a distinct and remarkable contrast in origin, character, and practical methods between the colonial systems of France and England The first French colonies derived their initiative from the Crown, they were formed under strict official regulations, and the note of high orthodoxy was predominant in their constitution. The first English colonies owed their foundation either to men who had left their fatherland to escape the oppression of kings and bishops, or to 'gentleman adventurers' with a taste for the roving life and freedom of a new country, which they were quite willing to hold as national property so long as they were permitted to use their own ways and means of acquiring it. And at a time when the great commercial companies of England and Holland were already wresting from Spain and Portugal the invaluable prize of the sea borne trade with Asia, the French merchants were deterred from entering into competition with them mainly by the misguided solicitude of their own Government.

For the commerce of France, however better times were coming. The period of greatest colonial expansion, as it is styled by French writers, was inaugurated when Colbert, the famous minister of Louis XIV,

launched, in 1664, his two Companies of the East and West Indies. It has been already explained that in those days the term 'Indies' bore an exceedingly wide geographical significance in both hemispheres. Under the general denomination of the East Indies were included all the coasts of Southern Asia, from the Persian Gulf to China, Malacca, Borneo, Java, and all the rich Spice Islands of the China Sea By the West Indies were meant not only the islands now known under that name, but the whole eastern littoral, and even the interior as far as it had been explored, of Northern and Central America No ship could double the Cape of Good Hope without coming within the trading sphere of the East India Companies, while to cross the Atlantic was to trespass on some West Indian monopoly The Charter of the Dutch Company (1600) conferred upon them the exclusive privilege of navigation in all Eastern waters, with power to seize and confiscate any vessel that intruded on their domain The Charter of Colbert's East India Company granted a similar monopoly of trade for fifty years in all lands and seas beyond the Cape of Good Hope It is not too much to say that the great Companies of the seventeenth century were the champions and delegated agents of their respective nations in the competition for commerce and territory throughout the whole non Christian world, and from this point of view the importance of a good colonial policy can hardly be over estimated The French West Indian Company was an association of the type invented by Richelieu, with authority to conquer and convert the heathen, but the foundation of the East India Company by Colbert on different lines marks a distinct step in advance This Company, fitted out on the Dutch and English models as a chartered body with

exclusive privileges and a large capital, was destined to acquire for France a substantial share of that rich commerce in Asiatic commodities that has made the fortune of so many maritime States

In those days of corruption and intolerance, official tutelage was everywhere a sore burden, but the French Companies had something even heavier to bear. The king, the royal princes, and the principal courtiers took active part in floating the concern, and they were good enough to subscribe largely to the investment High ecclesiastic dignitaries condescended to patronize the East India Company, the prospectus was advertised in the churches and recommended from the pulpits, while royal proclamations exhorted all true Frenchmen to seize this opportunity of making their own fortunes and contributing to their country's prosperity Strange to say, however, not even these appeals to patriotism and piety roused any widespread enthusiasm among mercantile men The capital expected from public subscription came in very slowly, in spite of heavy official pressure upon the great towns, for the traders, who had no guarantee for the good faith or consistency of a despotic government, vainly implored the bureaucracy to reduce the crushing tariffs on foreign imports, and to leave the management of the business in private hands As for the West India Company, it seems to have broken down by 1674, when its charter was revoked Colbert determined to abandon henceforward for the purpose of colonization the agency of Companies, and to substitute direct administration by a minister of the Crown

For the East Indies however Colbert maintained the organization of a chartered Company, although under the close superintendence of the Crown Yet

the legitimate commercial undertakings of this Company had been hampered at the outset by combining them with an expedition for the colonization of Madagascar, which failed disastrously. The first attempts of the French to gain a footing on the Indian coast were also defeated by the Dutch, so that in six years after its foundation this Company was entangled in very serious embarrassment Nevertheless, if the most liberal support and encouragement from Louis XIV and his great minister could have secured success to the Company—and if a sharp turn of general policy, adverse to Colbert and his commercial views, had not speedily supervened—it is possible that the French might have made good their position in India before the close of the seventeenth century Their initial difficulty was that the ground had been preoccupied by Holland, against whom Louis XIV declared war in 1674, partly, it is said, on account of the violent opposition by the Dutch to French interference with their Indian trade But a few years later, when Louvois had plunged his master into interminable continental wars, the light and guidance of Colbert's pacific influence suffered total eclipse, and projects of colonial or commercial expansion were set aside for plans of campaign

At the opening of the eighteenth century, therefore, the Portuguese, who had started first by priority of discovery, were at a standstill far in the rear. The Dutch, who followed, had wrested from the Portuguese most of their trade and territory, but the strength of Holland had been already broken by the incessant attacks of France, who had been good enough thus to relieve England of her most capable maritime rival From the beginning of the eighteenth century the grasp of the Dutch upon points along the

Indian coast becomes gradually relaxed; they relinquish the contest for predominance in that region, and their principal trading stations are shifted south-eastward to Ceylon, Java, Borneo, and the Spice Islands. The Danish East India Company was extinguished in 1728. In 1722 the Emperor of Austria had granted to the merchants of the Austrian Netherlands a charter authorizing the Ostend East India Company to trade, fit out armed vessels, build forts, and make treaties with Indian princes; but this interference with their trade alarmed the maritime powers England, France, and Holland united in diplomatic protests and threats of armed resistance to its establishment in the East Indies, until the Emperor finally agreed by treaty to suppress the Ostend Company totally The French, on the other hand, were gradually gaining ground and strengthening their position in India, for although they had been much enfeebled by the disastrous European wars that ended in 1713, their resources and their enterprising spirit revived during the tranquil interval of the next thirty years.

Under the pacific ministries of Fleury and Walpole trade and navigation now began to gather strength on both sides of the Channel although the speculative mania that supervened in France at the beginning of this long peace had involved her East India Company in some dangerous vicissitudes They had been first absorbed (1719) into a gigantic Company of the Indies with exclusive right of trade on the African coast as well as on the shores of the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. The next step was to place this Company, already laden with privileges and monopolies, in charge of the famous Land Bank, with Law as Inspector-General over all their business, commercial and finan-

cial The inevitable result was enormous inflation of the shares and operations, followed by a sharp and ruinous collapse, nor did the Company right themselves until a royal decree had cut away autocratically all their liabilities, when they again confined themselves to the East India trade. Their situation in the Indian waters now began rapidly to improve. They had occupied in 1715 the important island of Mauritius (abandoned by the Dutch), and were steadily taking up their ground side by side with the English on the south-eastern or Coromandel coast of India, where Pondicherry, the seat of the Governor-General of all the French settlements, was developing into a fine town with 70,000 inhabitants This settlement had been established in 1674 by Francois Martin, who built the town, acquired the lands adjoining, and brought Pondicherry to such a high degree of solid prosperity during twenty-five[1] years of wise and courageous administration, that he is regarded by some French writers as the true founder of French India. From 1735 to 1740 the capital and dividends of the Company showed a substantial increase, they held in India five chief stations, and they were trading with China, although it does not appear that they ever established themselves in the Spice Islands or the Malay archipelago The earlier governors, Lenoir and Dumas, managed their affairs with prudence and sagacity Duplcix, who followed them, was a man of larger calibre, full of energy and ambition, who had distinguished himself as chief of the French factory at Chandernagore on the Hooghly river When in 1741, he was appointed to succeed Dumas in the governorship

[1] 1681-1706 But from 1693 to 1697 the place was in the possession of the Dutch.

of Pondicherry, with supreme civil and military authority in the settlement, he lost no time in developing his bold and high-reaching projects for the promotion of his Company's interests.

In this manner it came to pass that, not long after the great settlement of Europe which was accomplished at the Peace of Utrecht, France and England alone faced each other as serious competitors for the prize of Indian commerce, having distanced or disabled all other candidates Not only in the West but in the East, the commercial and colonial rivalry between the foremost maritime States of Europe had reached its climax towards the middle of the eighteenth century A high spring-tide of maritime enterprise, setting strongly and decisively from Europe toward the unguarded coasts of India, was bearing on its rising wave the ships of these two jealous and powerful nations So early as 1740, when war between England and France, though not declared, was imminently threatening, the French government had been entertaining the plans of Labourdonnais for destroying the English factories in the East Indies A few years later Dupleix was actively encouraged in his grand project of expelling us from the Coromandel coast At the same time the French were making substantial progress in North America having already formed the design of pushing down the Ohio, in order to appropriate what would now be called the Hinterland in the rear of the English colonies on the sea coast Towards the middle of the century, therefore, the territorial position and prospects of France in America and Asia had decidedly improved; and the growing dissensions caused by discordant political interests in Europe were exasperated by quarrels over trade and colonies beyond sea The

colonial quarrel was fought out, as we know, in North America; the field on which the two nations met to contend for what was at that time the most valuable sea-borne trade in the world, was India. And from this time forward the really potent element in Asiatic politics, which has since transformed and may again dominate the whole situation, is the political rivalry and rapidly increasing ascendancy of the European Powers

The contest had begun in a spirit of keen but pacific commercial rivalry Each nation was represented in India by a substantial and well-equipped Company, which kept to their business, established factories and agencies, and concerned themselves very slightly about the internal affairs of the State or province within whose jurisdiction they were settled But at home the circumstances and constitution of the two bodies reflected the differences of national character and political conditions then prevailing between the two mother countries. It is exceedingly instructive to examine the financial transactions of the French and English Companies, respectively, with their governments at this period, and to observe the remarkable contrast of situation, system, and administrative principles which the comparison brings out In France the East India Company were closely connected with the Government; they farmed monopolies, received treasury grants and subsidies, dealt largely in loans and lotteries, and being usually deep in the State's debt, were consequently at the mercy of the Crown From the year 1723 their Directors had been appointed by the king, whose officers exercised such constant control over the management that, as the Company declared afterward, the interference of the government was the cause of all their

[illegible]. From 1747 they were constantly borrowing large sums on the security of their privileges or revenue farms; it was from such revenues as these that their dividends were paid, and their stock artificially maintained. Under an able minister who might have paid serious attention to Indian affairs, it is quite possible that the administration of the French Company might have been directed on larger political principles and pursued with more force and consistency of aim, than could be expected from a private mercantile association. But as the government of Louis XV soon began to sink under the embarrassments, vices, and misfortunes of incapable rulership, official patronage proved gradually fatal to the Company that depended on it. The English Company, on the other hand, were so far from being in debt to their Government, that they had aided the public treasury with large loans and contributions, which amounted in 1750 to £4,200,000. They were an independent and powerful corporation, trusting not to official favour but to parliamentary influence in transacting business with the Crown, and as they were left to manage their own affairs, the greater responsibility thrown upon their chiefs produced in the long run a body of sound and experienced administrators, guided by long tradition, well versed in foreign trade, and backed by the overflowing capital of a great mercantile community.

In India the means and resources of the two Companies were, at the outset, fairly equal. The settlements on the Coromandel coast were not only important as points of attraction for the inland commerce, they were also valuable as entrepôts for the general traffic on both sides of the Bay of Bengal, and as naval stations for the protection of the thriving trade with the Malacca

Straits and Eastern Asia; Ceylon being then possessed by the Dutch. Moreover, since the decay at the heart of the Moghul empire was felt soonest at its extremities, the distant provinces had already begun to fall away into confusion The settlements in the far south of India were thus becoming more independent of the imperial authorities than the factories in Bengal, which were up the estuary of a river with forts below them toward the sea, and where the province was still under effective government On the west side of India the Marathas, who held most of the districts along the sea-shore, were by this time strong enough to keep foreign traders within bounds But on the south-east or Coromandel coast, Madras and Pondicherry, the headquarters of the French and English Companies, were fortified and fairly armed places upon open roadsteads, lying within the governorship of the Carnatic, which was the name for a large province attached to the Viceroyalty of the Dekhan, that is, of South India This Viceroyalty had been conferred by the Emperor upon Asaf Jah, with the title of Nizam-ul-mulk, who soon made himself so powerful as to excite alarm and jealousy at the Imperial Court When, however, an attempt was made to remove him, the Nizam, who had been summoned to Delhi, marched back into the Dekhan with an army defeated the officer sent to replace him, established his authority in the south, and became the most powerful feudatory of the empire A few years later he took advantage of the disorganization caused by Nádir Shah's irruption into North India to consolidate his great possessions south of the Nerbudda, including the Carnatic, into an hereditary rulership, owning a nominal allegiance to Delhi, but in fact entirely independent.

In the Carnatic, which had been a governorship

under the Dekhan Viceroyalty, a kind of subordinate principality had been established by one Saadut Ullah; but on his death the succession was disputed, and the disorders that ensued, though they were temporarily suppressed by the Nizám, necessarily weakened local authority in the country round the English and French settlements It was here that the French and English came to blows in 1745, as soon as the news reached India of a declaration of war between France and England. And from this outbreak of hostilities is to be dated the first crossing of swords on Indian soil in a national duel which lasted, with short intervals, for eighteen years, until one of the combatants was disarmed and virtually driven off the field.

When, in 1741, Dupleix was appointed Director-General of the affairs of the French East India Company, he succeeded to an office that had been held by two predecessors of character and capacity, who had shown great tact and judgment in their dealings with the native powers Mahe and Karikal had been quietly acquired for France, and during the confusion into which the whole Carnatic was thrown by the Maratha invasion in 1740, the Mahomedan princes had found shelter for their families and treasure behind the walls of Pondicherry But the plans and aims of the French had not travelled beyond the security and extension of their commerce, until the stirring and ambitious spirit of Dupleix, who made no secret of his opinion that the French temperament was better suited for conquest than for commerce, led the Company into a more adventurous field of action He foresaw that in the event of war with England the rising jealousy between the two Companies would kindle hostilities in India So he began to negotiate with the neighbouring chiefs,

to assume titles granted under the imperial patent, and to imitate the solemn ostentation of Indian grandees, with the object of preparing the way towards a place for his Company in the political system of the country. He spared no pains to reform his military establishments and to fortify Pondicherry against the contingency of an attack from the sea; nor did he desist when the Directors at Paris ordered him to suspend all expenditure on defensive works, to pay the Company's debts, and attend to their trade.

The declaration of war in Europe (1744) gave the signal for beginning the first act of a dramatic contest that was to determine the issue whether France or England should win a great dominion in South Asia. We have to bear in mind that this issue did not depend, as some writers have imagined, upon the petty fighting that ensued along the Coromandel coast, or on the success or failure of their rival alliances and intrigues with Oriental princes The issue was determined, in reality, by the result of the struggle between these two nations for superiority on all the seas The corner-stone of the whole fabric of Asiatic commerce had by this been laid upon the Indian mainland, where alone it could find a solid foundation, and while the security of this commerce depended on naval power, that power was also sure to expand with the development of trade. Although, therefore the story of the Indian contest is but an episode of that grand international drama which was played out in the next fifty years with many changes of scene and character, it is interesting, instructive, and of the highest importance for a proper understanding of the events and causes which threw open before the English the way to ascendancy in India, and which lie at the base of their success.

CHAPTER V

THE FRENCH IN INDIA UNDER DUPLEIX

SECTION I *War between France and England*

THE war between England and Spain, which had begun in 1739 over commercial and maritime quarrels, was now gradually drawing France into open hostilities with England. But as the English had a larger and more powerful navy, the rupture between the two countries placed France in the dangerous position of holding great transmarine possessions and interests by insecure lines of support and communication. In America and the West Indies the colonial dominions of France were more extensive than those of England; in India there was no great difference as to strength or settlements, and the French had the advantage of a most valuable though rather distant base of operations at the islands of Bourbon and Mauritius, with a station on the Madagascar coast.

At Mauritius, Labourdonnais as governor had since 1740 been accumulating naval stores and preparing, with the aid and approval of the French government, to fall upon the English merchant vessels, or to attack the English settlements in India. In 1743, however, the Directors of the French East India Company, anxious to preserve neutrality in the East Indies, had procured the despatch of orders which held back

Labourdonnais; and although, when war had been actually declared in 1744, he received authority to take the offensive, he was not ready until 1746, when he mustered his fleet at Madagascar and sailed in June for the Coromandel coast. Meanwhile a squadron sent out from England had appeared in 1745 off Pondicherry, which had a weak garrison and unfinished fortifications. Dupleix, in order to gain time, induced the Nawáb of the Carnatic to interpose with an order forbidding hostilities within his jurisdiction; and in deference to this prohibition the English commodore was persuaded by the authorities at Madras to suspend his attack. The stormy season compelled him to leave the coast, but when the British fleet returned next year it was met by the French squadron from the Mauritius. The English Company now in their turn appealed to the Nawab, but they found him lukewarm, he had not been properly bribed, his own position was insecure; nor was it in any case possible for him to prevent the two hostile fleets from fighting or bombarding each other's factories on the sea-shore. After an indecisive naval action the English ships withdrew to Ceylon. Labourdonnais now landed some two thousand men, and Madras was besieged by land and sea, until it was surrendered on terms permitting the English to regain their town on payment of a ransom[1]. But this compromise was violently opposed by Dupleix, who saw plainly enough that to build up solidly a French dominion in India he must begin by clearing away the English, and who therefore insisted that the fortifications of Madras should be razed to the ground. The Nawáb of the Carnatic also interposed on his side, professing much indignation at this private war within his sove-

[1] September, 1746.

reignty, and demanding that the town should be given up to him, which Dupleix promised to do. After a sharp quarrel over this question Labourdonnais, whose fleet was shattered by a tremendous storm, sailed back with the surviving ships to the Mauritius, leaving the French in temporary possession of Madras, under an agreement, made by Labourdonnais, that if the ransom were paid it should be restored to the English within three months.

The next incident was important Dupleix, who had now 3,000 French soldiers at his disposal, and who had been positively ordered by a secret despatch from his government on no account to give up Madras, had not the least intention of relinquishing it either to the Nawáb or the English Company When the Nawab invested the town Dupleix drove off the native troops so effectually as to establish, at one blow, an immense military reputation for the French in the Carnatic, since the ease and rapidity with which the Nawab's army was dispersed at this first collision between the regular battalions of Europe and the loose Indian levies proved at once the formidable quality of European arms and discipline. Dupleix made unsparing and audacious use of his advantage, he declared null and void the agreement with the English, seized all the Company's property, carried the Madras governor and his officers to Pondicherry, where they figured as captives in a triumphal procession, and despatched a large force against the English fortress of St David, the only fortified post still held by the English about twelve miles south of Pondicherry But the French were surprised in their march, and the expedition was so sharply checked that the troops lay thereafter encamped inactively in the neighbourhood of the Fort, which they never succeeded

in besieging. In the meantime, as the English squadron was returning with reinforcements from Ceylon, Dupleix sent his four ships out of its way to the west coast, so that the sea was now open. When, therefore, in 1747, the French commander, Paradis, was about to move again on Fort St David, he was stopped by the appearance of the English squadron, which threw supplies and troops into the place, and compelled him to retire for the protection of Pondicherry. From this moment the tide turned. In attempting to take Cuddalore by a dashing blow the French were outwitted by Lawrence and beaten back with loss; Admiral Boscawen arrived with a formidable fleet and 1,500 soldiers; and Pondicherry was invested, in 1748, by land and sea. But as the French had failed before Fort St David, so the English failed before Pondicherry; the place was so clumsily besieged by the English and so gallantly defended by the French that the assailants had at last to draw off with serious loss.

In 1749 the news of the peace of Aix la Chapelle stopped the fighting in India, and restored Madras to the English in exchange for the restitution of Louisburg in North America to the French. The chief outcome of this sharp wrestle between the two Companies at close quarters on a narrow strip of sea-coast, was a notable augmentation of the French prestige in India, and great encouragement to Dupleix in his project of employing his troops as irresistible auxiliaries to any native prince whose cause he might choose to adopt. He was already in close correspondence with one of the parties in the civil war that was just beginning to spread over the Carnatic; he took care to keep on foot his disciplined troops, whose decisive value in the field had now been abundantly manifested; he had overawed

the neighbouring chiefs, depressed the English credit, and seemed to have struck out with the boldness and perspicacity of political genius the straight way toward establishing a French dominion in the Indian peninsula.

So far as it related to facts and circumstances on the Coromandel coast, his judgment of the situation was correct; the opportunity had come, and Dupleix had discerned the right methods of using it. The Moghul empire had finally disappeared in all the southern provinces; the whole realm was torn by internal dissensions; the Marathas, whose mission it was to prepare the way for a foreign domination by riding down and ruining all the Mahomedan powers, were spoiling the country and bleeding away its strength; the native armies in the south were no better than irregular ill-armed hordes of mercenaries; the coasts lay open and defenceless. Not only Dupleix, but others (as will be shown later on) were beginning to see the practicability of turning this state of things to the advantage of some European power. But Dupleix had not perceived or taken into account certain larger considerations which inevitably controlled the working out of his ambitious schemes and which soon began to counterbalance his local successes. Any plan of establishing the territorial supremacy in India of a maritime European power must be fundamentally defective; must necessarily suffer from dangerous constitutional weakness, so long as it does not rest upon a secure line of communication by sea. Until this prime condition of stability is fulfilled, the aggrandizement of dominion in a distant land only places a heavier and more perilous strain on the weak supports, and the whole fabric is liable to be toppled over by a stroke at its base.

No quarter is given by French writers to Labourdonnais, who is accused of having thwarted the thoroughgoing designs of Dupleix by the half-hearted measure of holding Madras to ransom, by refusing to co-operate energetically in the extirpation of the English settlements, and by sailing away to the Mauritius, so that the coast was left clear for the enemy. On his return to France he was thrown into the Bastille, where he remained three years, though in the end he was honourably acquitted His quarrel with Dupleix, who was imperious and uncompromising, may have had much to do with his hasty departure from the Indian seaboard But it is more than doubtful whether, if Labourdonnais had kept his shattered squadron in those waters, he could have held that command of the sea without which all the triumphs of Dupleix over the petty forts on the coast or over the loose levies of Indian princes, were radically futile

However this may be, it soon became evident that success on the land would follow superiority at sea We have seen that when, after the departure of Labourdonnais, a strong English fleet appeared on the scene, the French ships were obliged to leave the coast, while on land the French operations were at once paralyzed, and they were easily driven back into Pondicherry. Then, also, the restoration of Madras in exchange for Louisburg in North America showed that a mere local advantage counted only as a single move on the vast chessboard, and might be promptly sacrificed to larger combinations All these signs and tokens were to Dupleix so many warnings of his insecurity, and of the fallacy underlying the fair surface of his designs upon India. But either he missed the significance of sea power, or he committed the mistake of imagining that he could

shelter himself from naval attacks by carrying his conquests inland, forgetting that the roots of any European dominion in Asia must always be firmly planted in the fatherland. The experience of this first war seems to have brought him nothing but encouragement, for so soon as peace had been proclaimed at home he lost no time in prosecuting his schemes on a larger scale.

We have to remember, in any case, that Dupleix cannot be supposed to have known the relative strength of the maritime nations, or the conditions to which the naval forces of France had been reduced by the war of the Austrian succession The English had spent immense sums of money, but their navy had greatly increased in power and capacity, it had attained a clear superiority over the French everywhere, and notwithstanding some reverses it was far more than a match for the enemy in Indian waters The resources of Holland were exhausted, and she was threatened by imminent invasion, when peace was signed at Aix-la Chapelle As for France her victories in the Low Countries had brought her no substantial profit and much positive loss; for the damage done to Holland by the war told entirely in favour of England's commercial preponderance, while at sea her trade and marine had suffered so heavily, and her naval material at home was so completely spent, that according to Voltaire she had no warships left Such national destitution must have severely affected any great trading enterprise, it was particularly damaging to the interests of the French East India Company which were directly associated with the fortunes of the State At the end of the war the Company found themselves deep in debt; their Directors, all nominees of the Crown, had been profuse in expenditure, concealed the real state of their affairs, and endeavoured to bolster up their credit

by magnificent but fictitious dividends, until after 1746 their embarrassments compelled them to make sudden and startling reductions

The remedy of the French ministers, whenever anything seemed going wrong with their Company, was to appoint special Commissioners to supervise the Direction, notwithstanding the Company's protests that all their misfortunes were due to over-interference. In England the East India Company's administration was managed independently by great merchants, with a long traditional experience of Asiatic affairs, with a strong parliamentary connexion, with a very extensive business all over the East, and a large reserve of capital. In a comparison of the two systems we have on the French side of the Channel a Company propped up by lottery privileges and tobacco monopolies, subsisting on grants in aid from the treasury On the English side we have a rich corporation making annual loans to the government in aid of war expenses, borrowing millions at a very low interest, and using this great financial leverage to obtain from the ministers exclusive privileges and the extension of their Charter In England the superior wealth and naval instincts of the nation were directed with all the energy and active play of free institutions, in France the natural ability and enterprise of a courageous and quick-witted people were fatally hampered by a despotic bureaucracy, by growing financial confusion and by all the evils of negligent misrule

SECTION II *War between the two Companies*

To Dupleix in India these things could not be discernible he saw that his improved position and the increase of his troops gave ample scope to his patriotic

ambition, and he now launched out hardily upon the troubled and hitherto unexplored sea of Indian politics. Although the last war had not altered the relative situations of either Company, its effect had been to change their character and to deepen the colour of their rivalry; they had both acquired a taste for Oriental war and intrigue; they had each raised a military force which mutual jealousy prevented them from disbanding, though it was very costly to maintain The problem of keeping up a standing army without paying for it out of revenue is occasionally solved by an impecunious State at the cost of its neighbours, but there is also the alternative, well known in Indian history, of lending your army for a consideration The French and English in India could not make direct war on each other while the peace lasted in Europe, they could only prepare for the next rupture by manœuvring against each other politically, by husbanding their forces, extending their spheres of influence, and aiming back strokes indirectly at each other under cover of the *mêlee* that was going on in the country round them There was thus everything to invite and nothing to prevent their taking a hand in the incessant fighting for independence and territory among the princes and chiefs who had now discovered the weight of European metal on the warfield, and were quite ready to pay handsomely for a temporary loan of it The Companies, indeed, found little difficulty in striking a bargain with men whose best title to rulership was their power to take and hold, whose life and the existence of their principality were continually staked upon the issue of a single battle, capable usurpers with no right, rightful heirs with no capacity, military leaders who had seized a few districts, Maratha captains or Afghan

adventurers at the head of some thousand horsemen, provincial Viceroys who were trying to found dynasties. None of these rivals could afford to look far ahead or to concern themselves, in the face of emergent needs, with the inevitable consequences of calling in the armed European.

The two Companies, on the other hand, were under an irresistible temptation drawing them toward proposals that offered pay and employment for troops that they could not yet use against each other, with the prospect of large profits upon the campaign, extension of trade privileges or even territory, and the chance of doing some material damage to a rival. It must be admitted that the first who yielded to this temptation were the English, when they took up the cause of a Rája who had been expelled by his brother from the Maratha kingdom of Tanjore. But the expedition sent to reinstate him managed matters so badly that the Company were well content to withdraw it on payment of their war expenditure in addition to a small cession of land. This was not only a military failure but a political blunder, since the Tanjore intervention furnished Dupleix with an excellent precedent for taking part in the quarrels of the native rulers, precisely at a moment when he was meditating similar designs of a much more important and far-reaching character. He was now ready to develop his policy of assuring the ascendancy of France upon a system of armed intervention among the candidates who were preparing to settle by the sword the open question of the succession to rulership in South India.

His opportunity came with the death of Ásaf Jáh[1], the first Nizam, founder of the dynasty that still reigns

[1] April, 1748.

a large territory at Hyderabad. Ásaf Jáh's succession was disputed between his son Násir Jung and his grandson Mozuffur Jung, who both took up arms; whereupon the Carnatic, which had only been kept quiet by Ásaf Jáh's power of enforcing his authority, became at once the scene of a violent conflict between rival claimants for the subordinate rulership The entanglement of these two wars of succession threw all South India into confusion, producing that complicated series of intrigues, conspiracies, assassinations, battles, sieges, and desultory skirmishing, that is known in Anglo-Indian history as the War in the Carnatic The whole narrative, in copious and authentic detail, is to be read in Orme's History under the title of 'The War of Coromandel,' which records the admirable exploits of Clive, Lawrence, and some other stout-hearted but utterly forgotten Englishmen, who at great odds and with small means sustained the fortunes of their country in many a hazardous or desperate situation by their skill, valour, and inflexible fortitude

Into this medley Dupleix plunged promptly and boldly. His immediate aim was to establish in the Carnatic, the province within whose jurisdiction lay both Madras and Pondicherry, a ruler who should be dependent on the French connexion. His ulterior object was the creation of a preponderant French party at the court of the Nizám himself, to whom the Carnatic was still nominally subordinate, and by these two steps he hoped to obtain a firm dominion for his nation in India. In defending himself, afterwards, for having taken a part in these civil broils, he argued not unfairly, that neutrality was impossible, because if the French had refused all overtures for European assistance the contending princes would have certainly got it from

the English, who would thus have attained irresistible predominance However this may be, the result of his policy was that the English Company, who at first expected that the Treaty of 1748 would relieve them from the hostility of France, soon discovered that they were in greater danger than before; for the peace enabled Dupleix to employ his forces in giving such material assistance to Chunda Sahib, one of the competitors for the Carnatic, that the ruling Nawáb Anwarudin Khan was speedily attacked, defeated, and slain. The victorious Chunda Sahib joined forces with Mozuffur Jung, who was contending for the Nizámship, and both marched to Pondicherry, where they were received magnificently by the French, to whom they made a substantial grant of territory, with special allotments to Monsieur and Madame Dupleix. The French were now openly supporting Mozuffur Jung for the Nizamship of the Dekhan, and Chunda Sahib for the Nawabship of the Carnatic

The English, who regarded these proceedings with considerable dismay, although their own behaviour at Tanjore made protest embarrassing, became involved in an acrimonious correspondence with the French, leading obviously to a rupture Their position, which was now seriously threatened, left them no alternative but to take the side opposed to the French candidates in this double war of succession When Dupleix sent out a strong contingent in support of Mozuffur Jung, Násir Jung, his opponent, appealed to the English, who after some hesitation supplied a body of 600 men, and also assisted Mahomed Ali, whom Násir Jung had appointed to contest the Carnatic Nawabship against Chunda Sahib Thus Násir Jung and Mahomed Ali were supported by the English for the Nizamship and the Car-

natic, against Mozuffur Jung and Chunda Sahib who were backed by the French.

The English Company also sent home urgent requisition for succour, representing to their Directors that the French had 'struck at the ruin of your settlements, possessed themselves of several large districts, planted their colours on the very edge of your bounds, and are endeavouring to surround your settlements in such manner as to prevent either provisions or merchandize being brought to us.' The murder of Nasir Jung by his own mercenaries seemed indeed to secure the triumph of the French cause, for Mozuffur Jung, whom Dupleix was assisting, was thereby placed for the moment in undisputed possession of the Nizámship; while Chunda Sahib with his French auxiliaries became irresistible in the Carnatic, where only the strong fortress of Trichinopoly held out against him.

It would be very difficult to describe briefly and yet clearly the intricate scrambling campaigns that followed, in which the French and English on either side played the leading parts, for the result of every important action depended on the European contingents engaged. While their troops exchanged volleys in the field, the two Companies exchanged bitter recriminations from Madras and Pondicherry, accusing each other of breaches of international law, denouncing one another's manœuvres, and imploring their respective governments at home to interpose against each other's total disregard of the most ordinary political morality. The French troops had carried the Carnatic for their candidate, had sent Bussy with Mozuffur Jung to establish him as Nizam at Hyderabad, and seemed in a fair way towards general success. The English had thrown a reinforcement into Trichinopoly, where Mahomed Ali defended

himself steadily against Chunda Sahib; but the fortress was beleaguered by a greatly superior army, with a strong French contingent; and it was only saved when Clive made an effective diversion by his daring seizure of the capital of the Carnatic, Arcot. This was the turning-point of the war. A large division of the besieging army, despatched from Trichinopoly to retake Arcot, made some fierce assaults that were repulsed by the desperate valour of Clive's scanty garrison, who made such an obstinate stand behind very feeble defences that the attempt had to be abandoned. Then the English and their allies, led by Clive and Lawrence, took the open field against their enemy, cut off the French communications, dispersed Chunda Sahib's army, captured the French officers, and completely relieved Trichinopoly Chunda Sahib was murdered by the Marathas who had joined Mahomed Ali, and Mozuffur Jung was killed in a skirmish on his march towards Hyderabad

Meanwhile Bussy had established himself at Hyderabad, where he had set up a Nizam, had organized a complete *corps d'armée* under his own command, and had made himself so much too powerful for the native government that he necessarily provoked much jealousy, enmity, and plotting against him Having succeeded, nevertheless, by great dexterity and firmness in maintaining his position, he obtained from the Nizam an assignment of four rich districts lying along the eastern coast above the Carnatic, still called the Northern Sirkars which yielded ample revenue for the payment of his troops Yet Bussy well knew that his footing at Hyderabad, far inland, was isolated and precarious, dependent entirely on a semi mutinous army under a few French officers. He had therefore constantly

advised making peace with the English, and now the campaign in the Carnatic was visibly turning against Dupleix, who had no military commander to match against Clive and Lawrence

Dupleix was beginning to find that practice was making the English no worse players than his own side at the game which he had himself introduced. The whole strength of the French had been exerted, and vainly exhausted, against Trichinopoly, the protracted siege had brought them nothing but disaster Not only his native allies, but also the French Government at home, were losing their former confidence in Dupleix, for his policy may be said to have broken down when the French candidates for rulership were worsted, and when after some years of heavy expenditure on these irregular hostilities the results fell so far short of the expectations that he had raised Toward the end of 1753 he made overtures for peace, but so soon as the English discovered that he intended to retain in his own person the Nawabship of the Carnatic they broke off negotiations As his policy fell into disrepute, he had been naturally led to disguise the real condition of the Company's finances, so when the Directors in Paris were suddenly advised from Pondicherry that they were two millions of francs in debt they determined at once to recall him The English Company at home had long been pressing their government to protest diplomatically against this illegitimate system of private war, and against all the proceedings in India of Dupleix, whose manifest object they declared to be the extirpation of their settlements. They urged that 'the trade carried on by the East India Company is the trade of the English nation in the East Indies, and so far a National concern', that the French power was

growing, and that Dupleix had laid claim to the whole south-eastern coast from Cape Comorin to the river Kistna.

The French ministry, on the other hand, did not care to embroil themselves with England, whose sea power was dangerous to all their colonies, on account of these apparently interminable Indian quarrels Their finances were low, they had good reasons for honestly desiring to substitute pacific for warlike relations between the two Companies, to discontinue the practice of lending auxiliary troops to native princes, and to agree upon a mutual return to the old commercial business. So in 1754, having settled an understanding upon this basis with the English government, they deputed to Pondicherry M Godeheu, who superseded Dupleix, and concluded with the English governor, Saunders, first, a suspension of arms, secondly, a provisional treaty, afterwards ratified, whereby the Companies bound themselves not to renew attempts at territorial aggrandizement or to interfere in local wars, and covenanted to retain only a few places and districts stipulated in the treaty Mahomed Ali, whom the English had been supporting throughout the whole contest, was tacitly recognized as Nawab of the Carnatic This concession virtually dropped the keystone out of the arch upon which the high reaching policy of Dupleix had been built up, and on his return to France he died, after some vain attempts to obtain justice, in neglect, poverty, and unmerited discredit

SECTION III *Policy of Dupleix examined.*

It has been usual to regard this treaty arrangement, which put an end to the unofficial war between the two Indian Companies, as the turning-point of the fortunes

of France in the East Indies. The abandonment of the policy of Dupleix has been freely censured as short-sighted and pusillanimous, particularly by recent French writers The French government is accused of throwing up a game that had been nearly won, and of deserting in the hour of his need the man whose genius had engendered the first conception of founding a great European empire in India, who showed not only the possibility of the achievement but the right method of accomplishing it We are told that England, in conquering India, has had but to follow the path that the genius of France opened out to her[1] James Mill in summarizing the causes why the English succeeded, says that the two important discoveries for conquering India were, first, the weakness of the native armies against European discipline, and, secondly, the facility of imparting that discipline to natives in the service of Europeans He adds —'Both these discoveries were made by the French' And almost all writers on Indian history have repeated this after him, insisting that the failure of Dupleix is to be ascribed to the ineffective co-operation on the part of the French naval officers to the want of good military commanders, to accidents, bad luck at critical moments of the campaign and above all to the faint-heartedness of the French ministry

Now, it is quite true that Dupleix was a man of genius and far political vision, who strove gallantly against all these obstacles On the other hand it is also true that the English, with their usual good luck had in Clive and Lawrence commanders superior to any of the French military officers with Dupleix, except Bussy Bussy was a very able man, whom French historians delight to honour, but he was evidently intent, under Dupleix

[1] Xavier Raymond

as afterwards under Lally, much more upon building up his own fortunes as a military dictator at Hyderabad than on sharing the unprofitable hard-hitting struggle between the two Companies in the Carnatic; and when misfortune overtook Dupleix and Lally he behaved ungenerously to both of them. We may heartily agree with Elphinstone that Dupleix was 'the first who made an extensive use of disciplined sepoys, the first who quitted the ports on the sea and marched an army into the heart of the continent; the first, above all, who discovered the illusion of the Moghul greatness.' Nevertheless, although it seems invidious to detract from the posthumous glory of a man so able and yet so unfortunate as Dupleix, he cannot be ranked as an original discoverer in Asiatic warfare and politics, without taking into account surrounding circumstances and conditions that naturally pointed to the use of methods which he rather developed than invented.

The weakness of all Oriental States and armies had long been known[1], and India has always been, through natural causes, less capable than other great Asiatic countries of resisting foreign invasion. Her indigenous population has rarely furnished armies that could encounter the inrush of the hordes from central Asia; and the only soldiers upon which the princes of southern India could rely were commonly mercenaries from the north. At the end of the seventeenth century the imperial troops were probably still the best in India, but Bernier

[1] 'L'extrême faiblesse des Orientaux n'est plus un secret' (Leibnitz, *Mémoire à Louis XIV*, 1672). Compare also the following extract from a letter dated August 1751, to the East India Company in England from their President at Fort St David. 'The weakness of the Moors is now known, and it is certain any European Nation resolved to war on them with a tolerable force may overrun their whole country.'

[illegible] that a division of Turenne's men would have made short work of the whole Moghul army, nor could any European of military experience have doubted that the loose levies of the Carnatic would be scattered by a few well-armed and disciplined battalions. Nor was there, in point of fact, any great novelty in the introduction by the French of the practice of drilling a few native regiments for their own service. The Moghul army had always contained some European officers, while within a very few years after the time of Dupleix the Maratha chiefs were forming trained regiments, and so soon as the European Companies began to engage in Indian wars, the expedient of giving discipline to the mercenaries who swarmed into their camps was too obviously necessary to rank as a discovery. The real discovery of the value of organized troops had to be made, not by Europeans who knew it already, but by the natives of India who had never before made trial of such tactics, or had met such bodies in the field.

But there is no need to attempt any detraction from the high credit fairly due to Dupleix for having first started on the right road towards European conquest in India. The more interesting question is why, with so much energy, ability and patriotism he made so little way. To those who maintain that, but for the blindness of the French government towards the ideas of Dupleix, the blunders of colleagues or subordinates, and the final disavowal of Dupleix France might have supplanted England in India—the true answer is that these views betray a disregard of historic proportion, and an incomplete survey of the whole situation. They proceed on the narrow theory that extensive political changes may hang on the event of a small battle, or on the behaviour at some critical moment of a provincial

general or governor The strength and resources of France and England in their contests for the possession of empires are not to be measured after this fashion, or to be weighed in such nice balances It may even be questioned whether the result of the confused irregular struggle between the two Companies in the Indian peninsula told decisively one way or the other upon the final event The Carnatic war, being unofficial, was necessarily inconclusive, for neither French nor English dared openly to strike home at each other's settlements, while even if this had been done indirectly through native auxiliaries, the home governments must have interfered earlier The system of private or auxiliary war gave Dupleix this temporary advantage against the English, that it was necessarily confined to the land, where he was the stronger, for as the two nations were at peace their fleets could not take part in it On the outbreak of national hostilities three years later, the naval strength of England came into play with decisive effect

Dupleix was a man of original and energetic political instincts, of an impetuous and morally intrepid disposition, who embarked upon wide and somewhat audacious schemes of Oriental dominion and lost the stakes for which he played more through want of strength and continuous support than want of skill He saw that so long as an European Company held their possessions or carried on trade at the pleasure of capricious and ephemeral Indian governments the position was in the highest degree precarious The right method, he argued, was to assert independence, to strike in for mastery, and to strike down any European rival who crossed his path, and if the English had not been too strong for him he might have succeeded He made the common-

place mistake of affecting ostentatious display and resorting to astute intrigues in his dealings with the Indians; whereas a European should meet Orientals not with their weapons, but with his own. His claim to be recognized as Nawáb of the Carnatic, under patents of doubtful authenticity, was a grave political blunder, since it was quite impossible for the English to acquiesce in a position that would have placed their settlements in perpetual jeopardy. Major Lawrence, writing from his camp near Trichinopoly of the negotiations that were attempted in January 1754, said—'It is my opinion there never can be peace in the province while Dupleix stays in India. He neither values men nor money, nor anything but what can gratify his own ambition. The continual ill-success of his troops would have made any body but him reflect and be glad of the terms offered; but he talks not like the Governor of Pondicherry but as Prince of the Province.'

Although some allowance must be made for the prejudice of an adversary, there is much truth in this view of the conduct and attitude of Dupleix. We may regard him, nevertheless, as the most striking figure in the short Indian episode of that long and arduous contest for transmarine dominion which was fought out between France and England in the eighteenth century; although it was far beyond his power to influence the ultimate destiny of either nation in India, and although the result of his plans was that 'we could accomplish for ourselves against the French exactly everything that the French intended to accomplish for themselves against us[1].' It is certain, moreover, that the conception of an Indian empire had already been formed by others beside Dupleix, and that more than one clear-headed observer

[1] Clive, *Letter to Lord Bute*, 1762.

had perceived how easily the whole country might be subdued by an European power.

It is easy to understand that in 1753, when France and England determined to stop the fighting between their two Companies in India, they were actuated by the obvious expediency of terminating a protracted war between the representatives of two nations who were at peace in Europe, and of compelling their Indian governors to retire from politics and revert to trade. On the scene of action neither side had as yet gained any decisive advantage In 1754 the French and English had both received reinforcements that brought their respective European forces up to about 2,000 men each, but Orme says that the English troops were in quality so superior to the French that if hostilities had continued the English must have prevailed The presence of an English squadron on the coast was also an argument, he observes, that inclined M. Godeheu toward pacific views On the other hand, the French held a much larger territory than the English, and apparently a more considerable political connexion among the native States The English governor at Madras, in transmitting to the London Board the provisional treaty he had made with Godeheu in 1754, warned his Company that the French were in an advantageous position for continuing hostilities, they had, he wrote, a stronger military force—particularly in native cavalry, which could harry the English districts —and 'their influence with the country powers far exceeds ours.'

Yet the views and motives by which the French ministers were actuated are amply intelligible. The policy of Dupleix had been frustrated in the sense that, after four years of irregular warfare, he had brought

the Company no nearer to the triumphant conclusion that was to compensate them for heavy military expenditure; while the English Company, though hard pressed, was by no means beaten; their troops were solid and well led, their finances in very fair condition Dupleix might have gained ground, at best unstable and slippery, among the native princes, but in Europe the English government was remonstrating strenuously, and would certainly go beyond remonstrance whenever it should become manifest to the English people that their Indian trade and possessions were seriously menaced The headquarters of each rival Company, at Madras and Pondicherry, lay along an open roadstead, completely exposed to attack by sea The English fleet under Admiral Watson had just reached the coast, and the French government must have been conscious of the inferiority of their own navy. And since the treaty of 1754[1] maintained the French in possession of much larger territory on the Coromandel coast than was awarded to the English—while Bussy was still at Hyderabad with his division of 5000 well-disciplined troops—we can only count the loss of Dupleix himself, and the recognition of Mahomed Ali in the Carnatic, as the two points in Godeheu's arrangement that could be said to have placed the French at a distinct disadvantage in India

The French ministers were actuated, moreover, by the imperious and fundamental necessity of restoring their dilapidated finances, they could not, in justice to their over-taxed people, persist in the unsound and extravagant system of subsidising a commercial Company that had plunged into the quicksand of Indian wars. In 1754 the French Company were on the verge

[1] Published in Madras, January, 1755

of insolvency; their affairs were under official enquiry; they were demanding large subsidies from the treasury, and it was clear that the public credit would suffer seriously if they were allowed to go into liquidation. Dupleix had laid down the principle, which he was endeavouring to impress upon his government, that no Company could subsist in India which had not a fixed revenue from territory to provide for the cost of establishments. But at that time it was an axiom in France, and even in England, that conquest was incompatible with commerce; the opinion of all French authorities, mercantile and administrative, was unanimous against allowing a trading Company to acquire large territory, and these views had for years been impressed sedulously, though in vain, upon Dupleix. Whether his principle was right or wrong need not be discussed, for the real point is that it was just then impracticable. The exhaustion of the Company's resources, the embarrassments of French finance, and the weakness of the French navy, must have furnished the government with irresistible arguments against persisting in his policy. The true state and inevitable tendency of the contest between the two nations in India has been recognized by M. Marion, in his study of the history of French finance between 1749 and 1754[1]. In defend-

[1] 'L'impuissance absolue d'un homme, quel qu'il soit, à triompher d'une grande nation qui veut vaincre, a été trop souvent mise en relief par l'histoire pour qu'il soit permis de conserver quelques illusions sur ce qu'eût été la lutte de Dupleix et des Anglais. La véritable faute du gouvernement français n'a pas été le rappel de Dupleix, elle a été de rendre impossible par le déficit, par le gaspillage, par la décadence de notre marine le succès de la politique que Dupleix a voulu suivre, et il serait inique de faire retomber sur le contrôleur général la responsabilité de ces maux, qu'il a voulu, mais qu'il n'a pu empêcher.'—*Machault d'Arnouville*, par M. Marion (p. 442), 1891.

ing Machault d'Arnouville, the Controller-General of that period, from the imputation of having sacrificed an empire in Asia by recalling Dupleix, he shows that if the French government had retained his services and supported his policy, the ultimate event could not have been materially changed. The whole fabric of territorial predominance which Dupleix had been so industriously building up was loosely and hastily cemented; it depended upon the superiority of a few mercenary troops, the perilous friendship of Eastern princes, and the personal qualities of those in command on the spot. It was thus exposed to all the winds of fortune, and had no sure foundation.

The first thing needful before any solid dominion could be erected by the French in India was to secure their communications with Europe by breaking the power of the English at sea; but this stroke was beyond the strength of the French in 1754. In the last war the French navy had, according to Voltaire, been entirely destroyed, and though since the peace of 1748 it had to some extent recovered, yet we are told that in 1755 France had only sixty-seven ships of the line and thirty-one frigates to set against one hundred and thirty-one English men-of-war and eighty-one frigates. When the Seven Years War began in 1756, the French did make a vigorous attempt to regain command of the waterways, and it must be clear that to their failure in that direct trial of naval strength far more than to their abandonment of the policy of Dupleix must be attributed the eventual disappearance of their prospects of establishing a permanent ascendancy in India.

CHAPTER VI

THE SECOND FRENCH WAR

SECTION I *Lally*

In 1756, when a rupture with France over the North American colonies was imminent, George II, to save Hanover, made a treaty of alliance with Frederick of Prussia, against whom the Austrian Empress, Maria Theresa, had prepared an overpowering hostile coalition. Fortunately for England the French government, then under the sinister influence of Madame de Pompadour, was persuaded into a rash and unwise conjunction with the Austrians so that during the war France had to meet the Prussian army on land and the English navy at sea, a very formidable amphibious combination. From the beginning of the year 1756 both English and French in India had been expecting war, and each side had been protesting against the other's breaches of Godeheu's treaty; so that when toward the year's end news arrived of an open rupture in Europe, the effect was merely to substitute formal hostilities for the indirect skirmishings and threatening manœuvres that the two Companies had been carrying on in the Carnatic But as most of the English troops had been despatched with Clive to Bengal, and the French were expecting strong reinforcements, no immediate collision occurred on the Coromandel coast.

The French government, having resolved to

the English possessions in the East, laid out their plan of operations, prudently enough, on the principle of a regular military campaign. They committed the charge of a strong expeditionary force to Count Lally, instructing him to abstain from attempting to penetrate inland, to avoid participation in the quarrels of the native princes, and to concentrate his efforts upon seizing the fortified stations of the English on the coast and uprooting their commerce They warned him, in short, against reverting to the system of Dupleix and Bussy. The Directors of the French Company had no wish to set out again on schemes of territorial aggrandizement; they desired chiefly the restoration of their finances and the secure establishment of their commercial monopoly by the total expulsion of the English from the Coromandel coast

These views are treated somewhat impatiently by the latest French biographer of Lally [1], who writes that the French Directors were better fitted to weigh out pepper than to comprehend the problems of a people's expansion, and who lays very great stress upon Bussy's magniloquent reports of his conquests in the Dekhan and of his supreme influence at Hyderabad It will be recollected that the reigning Nizám (Salábut Jung) had been established on his throne by the French auxiliary troops under Bussy, who from that time forward exercised paramount influence in the State, being commandant of a small disciplined army under French officers, and in full possession of some rich districts assigned for its payment. After the peace of 1753 Bussy, whose position had not been shaken by the fall of Dupleix, went on strengthening himself in the Dekhan, but the military dictatorship of a foreign adventurer inevitably

[1] M. Tibulle Hamont.

aroused great jealousy and suspicion, so that not only the ministers and the nobles, but the Nizám himself, were intriguing against him with the Marathas and even with the English. His firmness and ability enabled him to hold his ground, though not without bloodshed, and in 1758 he had just put down a dangerous attempt to overthrow him, when he received a letter from Lally ordering him to repair immediately to Pondicherry. He was now in this serious dilemma, that if he should obey and quit Hyderabad the field would be left open to his enemies there, whereas if he remained, not only must he take the consequences of insubordination, but Lally's failure on the coast would unquestionably entail ruin, sooner or later, upon the French party at Hyderabad. Very reluctantly, and after much remonstrance, he obeyed the order. It is probable, on the whole, that he was right in believing himself likely to serve Lally better by remaining to assist the French army with supplies drawn from the resources of the Dekhan, than by joining him on the coast with a small reinforcement, but this is by no means certain. For the fact remains that the one essential point was to drive the English out of the country, that Lally was quite right in declaring no peace or security to be possible for France in India until this had been done, and that when the struggle came Bussy might have not been able to co-operate decisively from so distant a base as Hyderabad. Clearly the first step was to beat the English by adroit and straightforward fighting, whereby the problems of expansion would have been mightily simplified, and could have been solved afterwards at leisure. Unluckily for the French, Lally, a soldier of great bravery and self-devotion, was yet a man totally unfit for the work. The French minister, D'Argenson, when the Directors asked the Crown for

Lally's services, warned them in words that almost exactly foretold what subsequently ensued, that he was a hot-headed, stiff-necked martinet, who would burst out into thunderous fury at the least check or blunder, and would make himself so generally detested that his own officers would thwart him, trip him up, and foil all his operations for the satisfaction of ruining their general.

However, as the Directors insisted, Lally was sent out, with a force quite sufficient, in experienced and capable hands, to have reduced, at least temporarily, all the Coromandel settlements, particularly if it had reached India twelve months before it did arrive. If the expedition, which was determined upon in 1755 had left France in 1756 soon after the declaration of war, it might have descended upon the coast at a very critical moment. For in June 1756 the English had been driven out of Calcutta by the Nawab Suráj-ud-daulah, losing all their forts and factories in Bengal; and in October Clive had taken all the Company's best troops northward with the fleet from Madras to rescue his countrymen and recover Fort William. When these troops were despatched the Madras President and his Council fully realized the situation; they knew that war had been declared in Europe, that a strong French force was under preparation for India, that whenever it reached Pondicherry Bussy at Hyderabad would co-operate with Lally on the coast, and that the southern Presidency would be in great danger if this joint attack were made while the troops were absent in Bengal. They decided nevertheless, with remarkable promptitude and judgment, to run the risk of sending at once a large relieving force under Clive's command, in the hope that it might settle matters in Bengal and return before the French could appear on the Coro-

mandel-coast. Their venture met with the [illegible] deserved; for the preparations in France [illegible]tory and the outward voyage was so slow, that Lally did not land at Pondicherry until April 1758.

By that time the opportunity had been irremediably lost The English had not only driven Suraj-ud-daulah out of Calcutta, they had dispersed his army at Plassey, had dethroned him and set up another Nawâb, had become masters of Bengal, the richest province of India, and had expelled the French from all that region. A few months later Clive could report that 'perfect tranquillity reigns in Bengal', so that he was able to co-operate powerfully in the gallant defence of Madras by supplies of men and money He also made an effective diversion by despatching Colonel Forde to drive the French out of those important districts, the Northern Sirkars which was done very smartly and successfully Masulipatam, the headquarters of the French administration, was taken by assault; and the French army was thenceforward deprived of the 'immense resources' which it had been drawing during this war from the advantage of Bussy's influence and possessions For as these were the districts which had been assigned to him by the Nizam for payment of his troops, their loss was a heavy blow to Bussy's credit at that Court, it disclosed the real instability of his imposing position, and gave a strong impulse to the revolution which soon afterwards destroyed all French preponderance at Hyderabad

Meanwhile Lally had landed his men, had taken Fort St David, which was not very resolutely defended, and would have marched on Madras if he had not been prevented by want of money and supplies, and by the refusal of the French admiral, D'Aché, to co-operate.

He was entirely without tact or temper, suspected all the civil authorities of corruption, knew nothing of Oriental feelings or customs; and had precisely that impatient contempt of local experience and provincial soldiering that has so often led second-rate military commanders to disaster in colonial and Asiatic warfare In order to get money he made a fruitless raid upon Tanjore, which only plunged him deeper into unpopularity and financial embarrassment The English ships of war had now arrived, and several sharp though indecisive encounters with the French squadron had so damaged the French ships and discouraged their admiral, that in September 1758 D'Ache withdrew, like Labourdonnais before him, to the Isle of France Neither entreaties nor protests, nor the fury of Lally, could induce him to remain We have seen that Lally, who saw and said plainly[1] that the French could take no firm hold of the country until the English were beaten out of it, had summoned Bussy to join him from Hyderabad, but with Bussy's departure vanished all the French ascendancy at the Nizám's court, where it was immediately supplanted by English influence, and was never again restored Bussy had now arrived, and strove by arguments of every sort, including something like bribery, to persuade Lally to permit him to return, with no better result than a rancorous quarrel, in which Bussy lost patience, became estranged, and made no effort whatever to avert the discomfiture of the unlucky general

Surrounded by obstacles, almost destitute of means,

[1] 'Le roi et la compagnie m'ont envoyé dans l'Inde pour en chasser les Anglais, c'est avec eux que nous avons la guerre, tout autre [illegible] m'est étranger.'—*Letter from Lally* This was undoubtedly the sound principle, but Lally blundered heavily in acting upon it.

abhorred by the civil functionaries, and distrusted by the army, Lally marched desperately upon Madras, hoping to reduce it before the English fleet, which had withdrawn during the stormy season, should return to the coast But the place had been strengthened and well victualled, while Lally was in great straits for men and money, with no hope of reinforcements his troops were discouraged, and at Pondicherry he was much more hated than helped A letter from a high Pondicherry official to M Conflans (4th September 1758), intercepted by the English, gives some notion of the depression then prevailing at headquarters Lally furiously accused Bussy of disloyalty in evading his demands for money and active co-operation, nor can it be denied that Bussy, although far superior to Lally in military skill and in the knack of managing Orientals, did much prefer remaining at Hyderabad, where he was wealthy and independent, to serving against the English under Lally, who was suspicious, intractable, and manifestly predestined to ruin

In the course of the next twelve months Lally's situation grew rapidly worse A letter written by him from his camp before Madras to the governor of Pondicherry, betrays the unhappy general's impotent rage and misery His cash and gunpowder were both running out and the country round could furnish no more provisions He proposed to storm the place by the open breach, but his officers refused to risk the assault, and there was a serious mutiny among his European soldiers, yet he persevered until in February 1759 the arrival of the English fleet struck such dismay into his army that the siege was hastily raised, to the great damage of the French reputation among the native princes, who were all watching the con-

[illegible] Admiral D'Aché returned with his ships from Mauritius, threw some insignificant supplies into Pondicherry, and then disappeared finally, leaving French India to its fate. The English forces could now take the field against the French outposts, and they carried by assault the important fort of Vandewash. Clive's letter to Pitt in January 1759[1], before the siege of Madras had been raised shows that he had confidently foreseen that the English power at sea, and their possession of the resources of Bengal, must inevitably bring about Lally's complete discomfiture, and before the year's end this prediction was fulfilled The two armies manœuvred against each other in the Carnatic for some months, but Lally, disregarding Bussy's advice, insisted on attempting to recover Vandewash, whereupon he was attacked by Coote, who saw that

[1] 'Notwithstanding the extraordinary effort made by the French in sending out M Lally with a considerable force the last year, I am confident, before the end of this, they will be near their last gasp in the Carnatic, unless some very unforeseen event interpose in their favour The superiority of our squadron and the plenty of money and supplies of all kinds which our friends on the coast will be furnished with from this province, while the enemy are in total want of everything, without any visible means of redress—are such advantages as if properly attended to, cannot fail of wholly effecting their ruin in that as well as in every other part of India'

Compare the tone of this letter with the following extract from the intercepted letter (referred to above) written to M Conflans, 4th September, 1758, by a high Pondicherry official — 'Pauvres Français, où en sommes-nous? quels projets ne nous croyons nous pas en état d'exécuter? et combien sommes-nous déchus de l'espérance que nous avait donnée la prise du Fort St David! Je plains notre général, il doit avoir la tête bien embarrassée, quelque vaste que soit son génie Sans argent, sans escadre, ses troupes mécontentes, le crédit de la nation perdu, sa réputation chancellante, la mauvaise saison approchant et nous forçant à dépenser pour subsister, sans pouvoir tenter d'entreprise qui nous procure des fonds, que pouvons-nous devenir? Je ne crains pas pour moi, mais je vois avec peine que nous ne brillons pas.

since the siege chained the French down in [illegible] he could choose his own time and tactics for fighting them, whereas to meet him Lally would be compelled to divide his force, having to leave a part in the entrenchments. The battle that followed was gallantly contested between the European troops, who were about 2000 strong on each side, by push of bayonet, musketry at close quarters, and artillery. Coote's and Draper's regiments met the battalions of Lorraine and Lally; there was resolute charging and countercharging, until the French fell into some disorder, when the plunging fire of the English cannon, the explosion of a tumbril, the fine handling of their men by Coote and Draper, and the capture of Bussy, determined the defeat of the French The sepoys on both sides were kept back by their commanders and took little share in the action, the Marathas in the French pay hovered uselessly on the outskirts Lally vainly attempted, with his usual intrepidity, to lead in person a charge of the French cavalry—they could not face the superior artillery of the English, so he rallied his broken lines behind the entrenchments, and made good his retreat to Pondicherry [1]

It was nevertheless a fatal reverse The French could no longer keep the open field, they lost all their strong places, the districts from which they drew their supplies were gradually occupied by the enemy. The French fleet never returned to the coast, for D'Aché flatly refused to bring back his ships; the English squadron held the sea in great strength, and fresh detachments of English troops were arriving In this hopeless condition Lally was exposed to the ignoble reproaches and resentment of the civil officials within

[1] Battle of Vandewash, January, 1760.

Pondicherry, which was quite unprovided with magazines or a sufficient garrison, and was now at last blockaded by land and water[1]. The French could only make a feeble resistance; they were completely surrounded and half-starved, until they were compelled to surrender at discretion in January, 1761.

SECTION II. *Results of the War*

From the fall of Pondicherry we may date the complete and final termination of the contest between France and England in India. All that remained to the French in that part of the world, says Voltaire, was their regret at having spent during more than forty years immense sums to maintain a Company that had been equally maladroit in commerce and in war, that had never made any profits, and that had paid no genuine dividends either to shareholders or to creditors[2]. The association was dissolved in 1770, after it had been proved from official figures by the Abbé Morellet, who was employed to examine the accounts, that between 1725 and 1769 the Company had lost capital to the amount of 169 millions of francs. He estimated the sum total of the advances that had been made to the Company by successive French ministries, during those forty four years, at 376 millions; but it should be remembered that the Abbe seems to have been preparing a case for the Company's disso-

[1] 'Voici le moment arrivé de la catastrophe que j'annonce à cette colonie depuis deux ans, réduit, après douze mois de navigation et trente mois de campagne sans interruption, à 800 soldats et 700 cipahis pour toute l'armée, sans argent pour les payer, sans vivres pour les nourrir'—Lally to the governor of Pondicherry, October 7, 1760.

[2] 'Elle n'a subsisté que d'un secret brigandage.'—Voltaire, *Louis* [illegible]

lution. The French did indeed recover, at the peace of 1763, the places that had belonged to them before Dupleix entered upon his schemes of territorial expansion. Nevertheless the sinews of their war power were cut by the stipulation against their fortifying these places, and against their keeping troops in Bengal, whereby France was permanently shut out of North India and confined to some indefensible points on the seaboard The two primary conditions of success, whether commercial or military, in India were the establishment of strong *points d'appui* on the coast, and the maintenance of a naval force that could keep open communications with Europe, but the English had gained the preponderance at sea, while the French had now lost their footing on land The causes of their failure are to be found, not in the ill-luck or incapacity of individuals (for that might have been repaired), but in the wider combination of circumstances that decided against France her great contest with England at that period

A recent French writer[1] goes so far as to declare that if Lally had thrown into the sea the instructions given him in France, if he had resumed the policy of Dupleix and followed Bussy's advice, the imperial diadem of India would not now be worn by the English Queen It is more than doubtful whether Lally would have gained anything by imitating Dupleix, or by taking counsel with the astute Bussy, since both these able and gallant Frenchmen relied far too much upon spheres of influence and military protectorates over native rulers as the basis of ascendancy in India Such methods provide powerful leverage for the extension of Asiatic dominion, but not for its foundation, which must always

[1] M Tibulle Hamont, *Lally Tollendal.*

[illegible] and [illegible] support, in times of need, from the [illegible]ther country. Without this essential resource it [illegible] clear that to drive the English out of India [illegible] the Seven Years War was an exploit far beyond Lally's power or capacity. India was not lost by the French because Dupleix was recalled, or because Labourdonnais and D'Aché both left the coast at critical moments, or because Lally was headstrong and intractable. Still less was the loss due to any national inaptitude for distant and perilous enterprises, in which the French have always displayed high qualities. The record of their exploration and adventure in America and Asia during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, fully sustains the reputation of this courageous and energetic people It was through the short-sighted, ill-managed European policy of Louis XV, misguided by his mistresses and by incompetent ministers, that France lost her Indian settlements in the Seven Years War. When it is remembered that before the end of that war France had lost her North American colonies, all her African settlements, and some of her finest West Indian islands, that in Germany her campaigns had been unfortunate, and that she had suffered deplorably at sea, there need be little hesitation in acknowledging that better men than Lally must have failed on the Coromandel coast

To sum up the immediate local causes of the English triumphs in India were, first, the conquest of Bengal, which furnished us with the sinews of war and a firm [illegible] of operations on the mainland, whereas the French [illegible] soon exhausted their treasure-chest, and their only [illegible] base was at Mauritius Secondly, we had the [illegible] luck to find a commander of military genius, well [illegible] in Indian affairs, while the French general was

inexperienced and without the slightest tincture of the capacity for dealing with Orientals which Frenchmen have often displayed. And the essential underlying causes, the primary reasons, why the French could not hold India are to be discovered in the insolvency of their East India Company, the maladministration of their affairs at home and abroad, the continual sacrifice of colonial and mercantile interests to a disastrous war-policy on the continent, and above all in the exhaustion of their naval strength, which left all transmarine possessions of France defenceless against the overwhelming superiority of England[1]. The English nation was deeply and ardently interested in the struggle, the lead and direction was in supremely able hands. The whole unfettered energy of a free and fierce people had been wielded by Pitt, the ablest war minister that England has ever seen, against the careless incapacity of courtiers and the ill-supported efforts of one or two able but irresponsible officials, under such an autocrat as Louis XV[2]. Nor will it be denied that French writers are mainly right in ascribing the success of England at this period, in India and elsewhere, to this signal inequality between the two governments[3].

It was natural that after such mishaps and disap-

[1] Between 1755 and 1762 France lost ninety-four ships of war carrying 3880 guns, and on January 1, 1762 she had only forty-four line-of-battle ships left. *Essai sur l'histoire de l'administration de la marine.* Lambert de Sainte Croix, 1892.

[2] When the Duc de Choiseul pressed Louis XV about the state of the French navy at this time the king replied, 'Mon cher Choiseul, vous êtes aussi fou que vos prédécesseurs; ils m'ont tous dit qu'ils voulaient une marine, il n'y aura jamais en France d'autres marines que celles du peintre Vernet.' La Harpe.

[3] 'Elle avait vaincu par la seule supériorité de son gouvernement.' —H. Martin, *Histoire de France.*

pointments the benefit to be derived from distant colonies or Asiatic conquests should be sharply questioned in France. The imposing authority of Montesquieu had been pronounced, a few years earlier, against emigration beyond sea, on the ground that it had a tendency to drain the population at home, although he saw the great advantages of commerce and navigation. The anti-colonial party was now headed by Voltaire, who declared the loss of Canada to be France's gain, mocked at the folly of fighting for a few snow-covered acres more or less, and deplored the shedding of blood to procure coffee, snuff, or spices for the citizens of Paris and London In the latter part of this century, when the mind of French statesmen and writers had become still more impressed by political idealism, Rousseau followed on the same side with his discourses on the corrupting effects of luxury and modern civilization And although these writers varied widely in their points of view, they united in attacking with caustic irony or sombre reprobation the sinister influences of priestly ambition and unscrupulous propagandism The subordination of civil to ecclesiastical interests had too often hampered the authority of French governors in Canada, where the religious orders were much too strong nor should we forget that in India the intrigues of the Jesuit Lavaur were known to have fatally accelerated the disgrace and condemnation of the unfortunate Lally

But while in France the new spirit of humanitarian philosophy was consoling the nation for the loss of foreign trade and distant colonies, in England the tolerant and progressive ideas of the eighteenth century operated rather favourably than otherwise toward the spread of Asiatic dominion As commerce has in-

variably bred freethinking in religion, and generally all the world over, so rationalism and liberal principles have in their turn helped commerce, by saving Englishmen from the mistakes and prejudices that had hampered the commercial enterprise of Spain, Portugal, and partly of France. Our conquests in India began at the period, about the middle of the eighteenth century, when according to that century's latest and best historian, 'a latent scepticism and a wide-spread indifference might be everywhere traced among the cultivated classes [1].' The habit of treating their own religious differences with equanimity undoubtedly indisposes men to trouble themselves about the conversion of others, and leaves no room for the confusion of temporal with spiritual interests in dealing with heathen folk. No more suitable mental outfit could have been provided for Europeans in the religious climate of India; nor indeed could the charge of subordination to clerical influence, or of impolitic proselytism, have been ever brought home to the East India Company by their bitterest enemy. On the whole, therefore, the calm and open temper of the English mind at this period may be numbered among the moral conditions that were advantageous to our East India Company in contending for superiority in India.

We have thus seen that, of the three collisions between the French and English upon Indian soil, in the first both parties found themselves, at the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 very much in the same condition at the end as at the beginning of hostilities, with a slight advantage, if any, to the English. On the second occasion, when Dupleix launched his grand political schemes, the French closed the unofficial war in 1754 on terms

[1] Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*.

[illegible] they had probably some local superiority of [illegible] and position. The third war, which was [illegible], finished in 1761 decisively and irremediably against them, as was proved twenty years afterwards. When, in 1781, the French made their last descent upon an Indian coast, the long odds were for the moment against England on the sea, for she was fighting single-handed against all the maritime nations; against France, Spain, Holland, and her own American colonies. She was also entangled within India in a very intricate desultory war against Hyder Ali of Mysore and the Marathas, two powers which both held strips of the Indian seaboard, and were both corresponding with the enemy. The French fleet was under Suffren, the best admiral ever possessed by France, and the military force in the expedition was commanded by Bussy. Suffren was far superior as a naval tactician to the English commander, but the French admiral found on the Indian coast 'no friendly port or roadstead, no base of supplies or repair[1].' The French settlements had all fallen by 1779, and the invaluable harbour of Trincomalee, in Ceylon, had been taken by the English from the Dutch just a month before. It was retaken in 1782 by Suffren, but not until after we had made peace with the Marathas. And in any event the English power was by that time too firmly consolidated in India by our acquisition of Bengal, with the rich districts north-westward up to Allahabad, to be shaken by the landing on the south-east coast of a small force, which could hardly have produced more than local damage and temporary political confusion in the peninsula. [illegible]'s real object must have been no more than to [illegible] a diversion by harassing our Eastern possessions

[1] Mahan's *Influence of Sea Power in History*, p. [illegible].

while our forces were employed against the colonial revolt in America; and in 1783 his operations were interrupted by news of the Peace of Versailles.

We are therefore entitled to fix on the Peace of Paris in 1763 as the true date after which the maritime powers of Europe finally withdrew from all serious rivalry, either in commerce or conquest, with England in India. It must be obvious to all who carefully survey the situation, that when two great nations are at war in a distant country which can be reached only by a long sea voyage, the nation which has a superior navy can break the communications of its adversary, can cut off his supplies and reinforcements, and can starve him out. Now we have seen that in the Seven Years' War the English were far stronger in warships than the French; they swept the French navy out of all the seas and blockaded the whole Indian coast, so that their forts and garrisons became gradually weaker, and surrendered one by one. By 1763 the French dominion in India was completely suppressed, and by 1770 their Company was bankrupt. This left the English East India Company master of the field, and laid the foundation of the British empire in India. The epoch is one of preeminent importance in the history of the rise of our dominion, for thenceforward the contest for ascendancy is between the English and the native Powers only—a contest of which the issue was in reality so far from being doubtful, invisible, or amazing, that it could be and was already foreseen and deliberately foretold.

CHAPTER VII

THE CONQUEST OF BENGAL

SECTION I *Clive's Campaign* (1757)

IN the foregoing chapter the summary of affairs on the east coast has been carried forward up to the date of Suffren's expedition in order to present an unbroken view of our relations with the French in India It is now necessary to go back some years in order to take up the narrative of events in Bengal

The rise and territorial expansion of the English power may be conveniently divided into two periods, which slightly overlap each other, but on the whole mark two distinct and consecutive stages in the construction of our dominion The first is the period when the contest lay among the European nations, who began by competing for commercial advantages, and ended by fighting for political superiority on the Indian littoral The commercial competition was going on throughout the whole of the seventeenth century, but the struggle with the French, which laid the foundation of our dominion lasted less than twenty years, for it began in 1745 and was virtually decided in 1763. The second period, upon which we are now about to enter, is that during which England was contending with the native Indian Powers, not for commercial preponderance or for strips of territory and spheres of influ-

ence along the seaboard, but for supremacy over all India. Reckoning the beginning of this contest from 1756, when Clive and Admiral Watson sailed from Madras to recover Calcutta from the Nawab of Bengal, it may be taken to have been substantially determined in fifty years; although for another fifty years the expansion of our territory went on by great strides, with long halts intervening, until the natural limits of India were attained by the conquest of Sinde and the Punjab

The first thing that must strike the ordinary observer, on looking back over the hundred years from 1757 to 1857, during which the acquisition of our Indian dominion has been accomplished, is the magnitude of the exploit, the next is the remarkable ease with which it was achieved At the present moment, when the English survey from their small island in the West the immense Eastern empire that has grown up out of their petty trading settlements on the Indian seaboard, they are apt to be struck with wonder and a kind of dismay at the prospering of their own handiwork. The thing is, as has been said, so unprecedented in history, and particularly it is so entirely unfamiliar to modern political ideas—we have become so unaccustomed in the western world to build up empires in the high Roman fashion—that even those who have studied the beginnings of our Indian dominion are inclined to treat the outcome and climax as something passing man's understanding. Our magnificent possessions are commonly regarded as a man might look at a great prize he had drawn by luck in a lottery, they are supposed to have been won by incalculable chance It is surmised that we stumbled forward blindfold on our way to dominion, without any expectation that it would lead us to that end;

[illegible] to have discovered an empire accidentally, and to have obeyed the determination of events with no more foreknowledge than a rolling stone[1].

But it may be fairly argued that this view, which embodies the general impression on this subject, can be controverted by known facts. The idea that India might be easily conquered and governed, with a very small force, by a race superior in warlike capacity or in civilization, was no novelty at all. In the first place the thing had actually been done once already. The Emperor Báber, who invaded India from central Asia in the sixteenth century, has left us his authentic memoirs; it is a book of great historical interest, and nothing more amusing has ever been written by an Asiatic. He says: 'When I invaded the country for the fifth time, overthrew Sultan Ibrahim, and subdued the empire of Hindusthan, my servants, the merchants and their servants[2], and the followers of all friends that were in camp along with me, were numbered, and they amounted to 12,000 men.' 'I placed my foot,' he writes, 'in the stirrup of resolution, and my hands on the reins of confidence in God, and I marched against the possessions of the throne of Delhi and the dominions of Hindusthan, whose army was said to amount to 100,000 foot, with more than 1000 elephants.... The Most High

[1] The author of *The Expansion of England*, for instance, in that very instructive dissertation on our Indian empire which occupies two chapters of his book, lends himself to this popular belief. 'Our acquisition of India,' he says, 'was made blindly. Nothing great that has ever been done by Englishmen was done so unintentionally or accidentally as the conquest of India.' And again, 'The conquest of India is very wonderful in the sense that nothing similar to it had ever happened before, and that therefore nothing similar could be expected by those who for the first century and a half administered the affairs of the Company in India.'

[2] He means the Commissariat.

God,' he adds, 'did not suffer the hardships that I had undergone to be thrown away, but defeated my formidable enemy and made me conqueror of this noble country.'

This was done in 1526; Báber's victory at Pániput gave him the mastery of all Northern India and founded the Moghul empire. He had really accomplished the enterprise with smaller means and resources than those possessed by the English when they had fixed themselves securely in Bengal with a base on the sea; and the great host which he routed at Paniput at the beginning of his campaign was a far more formidable army than the English ever encountered in India until they met the Sikhs, at the end of a century's fighting. Now, what had been done before could be done again, and was indeed likely to be done again, for the whole country was quite incapable of resisting foreign invasion. So when at the opening of the eighteenth century the Moghul empire was evidently declining towards a fall, and people were speculating upon what might come after it, we find floating in the minds of cool observers the idea that the next conquest of India might possibly be made by Europeans.

The key-note had indeed been struck earlier by Bernier, a French physician at the court of Aurangzeb towards the close of the seventeenth century, who writes in his book that M. de Condé or M. de Turenne with 20,000 men could conquer all India, and who in his letter to Colbert lays particular stress first on the riches, secondly on the weakness, of Bengal. But in 1746 one Colonel James Mill, who had been twenty years in India, submitted to the Austrian Emperor a scheme for conquering Bengal as a very feasible and profitable undertaking. 'The whole country of Hin-

dusthan,' he says, 'or empire of the Great Moghul, is, and ever has been, in a state so feeble and defenceless that it is almost a miracle that no prince of Europe, with a maritime power at command, has not as yet thought of making such acquisitions there as at one stroke would put him and his subjects in possession of infinite wealth. . . . The policy of the Moghul is bad, his military worse, and as to a maritime power to command and protect his coasts he has none at all. . . . The province of Bengal is at present under the dominion of a rebel subject of the Moghul, whose annual revenue amounts to about two millions. . . . But Bengal, though not to be reduced by the power of the Moghul, is equally indefensible with the rest of Hindusthan on the side of the ocean, and consequently may be forced out of the rebel's hand with all its wealth, which is incredibly vast.' If we bear in mind how little could have been accurately known of India as a whole by an Englishman in 1746, we must give Colonel Mill credit for much sagacity and insight into the essential facts of the situation. He discerns the central points, he places his finger upon the elementary causes of India's permanent weakness, her political instability within, and her sea-coast exposed and undefended externally. Within ten or twelve years the English had carried out Colonel Mill's scheme, and it will be shown hereafter that when Bengal had been taken the further expansion of our dominion was quite clearly foreseen. By those on the spot it was treated not as accidental but as inevitable.

In the year 1716 the English, whose trading factories had long been settled in Bengal, obtained from the Moghul emperor an important firman, or imperial order, permitting them to import and export goods upon

payment of a fixed tribute, and protecting them from the heavy and arbitrary taxes laid on them at the caprice of the Nawábs. Bengal was a province under a governor whose ordinary title was the Nawáb Názim, who held office during the pleasure of the emperor, and who was frequently changed, so long as the empire was in its vigour, lest he should become too strong for the central authority. But as the power of the emperor declined the independence of the Nawábs increased in this distant province, until in the eighteenth century, when Maratha insurrections and the irruptions from central Asia multiplied the distractions of the State, the Bengal governors paid little obedience and less revenue to Delhi. Under Murshid Kúli Khan, a man of considerable ability, the governorship became in the usual fashion hereditary; but in 1742 his grandson was overthrown and slain by Alíverdi Khan, an Afghan adventurer who raised himself from a very humble post to be deputy-governor of Behár, and who won for himself by the sword the rulership of Bengal. During the fourteen years of his strong administration the foreign merchants had no great reason to complain; for although he levied large subsidies from the English, French, and Dutch factories, he gave them protection and enforced good order, suppressing all quarrels and tolerating no encroachments. On his death, in 1756, he was succeeded by his adopted son, known in English histories as Suraj ud daulah[1], a young man whose savage and suspicious temper was controlled by no experience or natural aptitude for rulership, and who had long been jealous of the English, whom he suspected of having corresponded with a possible rival against him for the succession.

[1] The accurate spelling is said to be Chirágh ud-daulah.

The new Nawáb had just been proclaimed, when letters reached Calcutta from England informing the President that as war with France was expected he should put his settlement into a state of defence; whereupon he began to strengthen the fortifications. But the right to fortify their places had not been conceded to the English in Bengal; and the Nawáb, to whom some offence had previously been given by the abrupt dismissal of a messenger, sternly ordered them at once to desist. The English President, Drake, not understanding his danger, answered by explaining that the fortifications were against the French, who had disregarded the neutrality of the Moghul's dominions in the last war by taking Madras, and who might this time attack Calcutta. This reply Suraj-ud daulah took to mean that his protection and sovereign authority were very lightly regarded by the foreigners. In great indignation he seized the factory of Kasimbazár, near his capital, and marched with a large army upon Calcutta. The English defended themselves for a time; but the town was open, the governor and many of the English fled in ships down the river, and the rest surrendered on promise of honourable treatment. Yet those whom the Nawáb captured with the fort were thrown into a kind of prison room called the Black Hole, from which, after one night's dreadful suffering, only twenty three out of one hundred and forty-six emerged alive [1].

As soon as the news of this dismal catastrophe reached Madras, the President lost no time in despatching the fleet commanded by Admiral Watson to Bengal, with troops under Colonel Clive. The force was calculated to be sufficient not only for retaking Calcutta, but also

[1] June, 1756.

for reducing Hooghly, expelling the French from Chandernagore, and even for attacking the Nawáb's capital at Múrshidábád, and Clive set out, as he wrote, 'with the full intention of settling the Company's estate in those parts in a better and more lasting condition than ever' He had less reason, he added, to apprehend a check from the Nawáb's army than from the country and the climate Nor indeed does it appear that any serious misgivings as to the result of the expedition troubled the government at Madras, where they were only anxious to get the business done in Bengal before the French armament under Lally should arrive on the Coromandel coast Clive lost no time in driving the enemy's garrison out of Calcutta and Hooghly The Nawáb marched down to encounter him with a very large force, which after some parleying was attacked by the English close to Calcutta The engagement was indecisive, but the Nawáb was so far daunted as to sign a treaty restoring to the Company their possessions in Bengal, and promising compensation for losses. This truce, however, was very soon broken There were strong reasons why the English should return speedily to Madras, but as France and England were now at open war, it was dangerous to depart while the French held their fortified station of Chandernagore, within a few miles of Calcutta So Watson and Clive carried the place by assault, but the Nawáb, who had at first acquiesced at the last moment withdrew his consent to the attack and he was secretly inviting Bussy to march from Hyderabad to his relief There could be no reasonable doubt that Suráj-ud-daulah would renew hostilities on the first opportunity, while on the other hand Lally's expedition must soon reach the eastern coast, and the Madras govern-

ment was urgently pressing for the return of the troops.

The English in Bengal thus found themselves in a perilous dilemma, since the troops could not return to Madras until Calcutta had been in some way placed beyond danger from the Nawab When, therefore, overtures were received from certain disaffected chiefs of the Nawáb's court, Clive entered into a compact to dethrone Suráj ud daulah, and to set up in his stead Meer Jáfir, one of the principal conspirators He then marched up the country against the Nawáb, whom he found entrenched at Plassey with about 15,000 cavalry, 30,000 foot, and 40 pieces of cannon The engagement began with some cannonading, in which a battery managed by Frenchmen gave much annoyance to the English Early in the afternoon the Nawab fled from the field, and as his army began to fall back an advance was made against the battery, which alone remained in position So soon as the French had been dislodged and some rising ground occupied that commanded the interior of the enemy's fortified camp, Clive delivered his assault at one angle, whereupon the Nawáb's whole army dispersed in a general rout leaving on the field its camp equipage, its artillery, and about 500 men. Clive's despatch reports the loss on his side to have been twenty-two killed and fifty wounded Next morning Meer Jafir, who had merely hovered about the flanks of the engagement with a large body of cavalry, paid a visit to Clive, was saluted as Nawab and hastened to occupy the capital, Murshidabad, where he soon after put to death Suraj ud-daulah The whole province quietly submitted to the new ruler, the emperor's government at Delhi, which was just then occupied by Ahmed Shah with an Afghan army, was totally incapable

of interference; so that by this sudden and violent revolution the English ascendancy became at once established in Bengal.

SECTION II. *The Native Armies of the Period.*

The rout of Plassey—for it can hardly be called a battle—is in itself chiefly remarkable as the first important occasion upon which the East India Company's troops were openly arrayed, not as auxiliaries, but as principals, against a considerable native army commanded in person by the ruler of a great province. It stands, in fact, first on the long list of regular actions that have been fought between the English in India and the chiefs or military leaders of the country. The event supplies, therefore, a very striking illustration of the radical weakness of those native governments and armies to whom the English found themselves opposed in the middle of the eighteenth century. This inherent feebleness of our adversaries, the inability to govern or defend their possessions, obviously explains why the English, who could do both, so rapidly made room for themselves in a country which, though rich and populous, was in a practical sense masterless. It must also be remembered that Bengal and the other provinces bordering on the sea in which the English won these facile triumphs, were far more defenceless than the inland country, partly through the dilapidation of the central power, partly because the people of those tracts are naturally less warlike than elsewhere, and partly by the accident that they were just then very ill governed. The army of the later Moghul emperors had always been bad, yet until Aurangzeb died it was quite strong enough to repulse any small expeditionary force descend-

ing upon the coast. Nor could such a stroke as Clive's at Plassey have been attempted with impunity if Bengal had happened to possess a vigorous and capable viceroy; for a few years later our first campaigns against Hyder Ali in the south and the Marathas in the west showed us that under competent leadership the superior numbers of an Indian army might make it a very dangerous antagonist

We have to understand, then, that our earliest victories were over troops that were little better than a rabble of hired soldiers, without coherence or loyalty. An Indian army of that period was usually an agglomeration of mercenaries collected by the captains of companies who supplied men to any one able to pay for them, having enlisted them at random out of the swarm of roving freelances and swordsmen, chiefly Asiatic foreigners, by whom all India was infested. These bands had no better stomach for serious fighting than the *condottieri* of Italy in the sixteenth century, the close fire of European musketry was more than they had bargained for, and artillery, properly served, they could not face at all Moreover their leaders changed sides without scruple, and were constantly plotting either to betray or supplant their employers. It is not surprising therefore, if troops of this kind were such exceedingly perilous weapons in timid or maladroit hands that the prince, governor, or usurper who had retained their services often went into action with a very uncomfortable distrust of his best regiments. In the eighteenth century most of the revolted provinces of the empire had been appropriated by successful captains of these mercenaries, among whom the best fighting men were the Afghans Their most celebrated leader was Ahmed Shah the Abdallee, a mighty

warrior of the Afghan nation, and the only great Asiatic soldier who appeared in India during the eighteenth century.

But no sooner had the European appeared upon the Indian arena, than the men of this new immigration were discovered to be distinctly superior to all Asiatic foreigners in the art of war, and far beyond them in those qualities of united, persistent, and scientific action by which a compact and civilized force must always prevail in the long run over incoherent and uninstructed opponents. Against the French or the English the dissolute and rickety Nawabs of Bengal and the Carnatic could only take into the field a crowd of mutinous soldiery, who often dispersed at the first shock and followed their leader in tumultuous flight. The natural and speedy result was that the military classes of the Indian population very soon began to transfer their services to the standard of leaders who always paid and usually won, who were invariably to be seen in the front line of battle, and who did the hardest fighting with a *corps d'élite* of their own countrymen[1]. Our own Sepoy army was recruited and gradually developed out of the immense floating mass of professional mercenaries (reckoned by good contemporary authority at two millions) who roved about India in those days. It is

[1] The rank and file of this *corps d'élite*, whose fighting qualities decided for us all our earlier battles, were drawn in those days from strange sources. General Smith, in his evidence before a Committee on the East India Recruiting Bill, told the House of Commons 'that in 1769, when he left India, the European army in Bengal was in very good discipline, considering the sort of men, who being chiefly raised about London were the riff-raff of the people, chiefly boys under seventeen or old men above forty to sixty years old, and fitter on their arrival to fill the hospital than the ranks.' He added that the Sepoys were 'almost too good.'—*Parliamentary Debates*, 1771, April.

on record that any number of foot-soldiers might be enlisted, although they 'deserted in shoals' when a very distant march was in prospect; and that the best cavalry of Hindusthan (Afghans, Tartars, Persians, or Marathas) might be had in abundance at six weeks' notice, 'many of them out of the very camp of the enemy[1].' The English commanders, however, seem to have chiefly relied for their infantry upon natives of India, who were probably more faithful to their salt, and more amenable to discipline, than the wilder folk of central Asia. And for a hundred years the Indian sepoy well repaid the confidence placed in his courage and loyalty. With artillery served by men who stood fast to their guns, with a few red-coated English battalions, with a strong contingent of well-drilled native infantry and some excellent native light cavalry, the Company's army presented a combination of war material that only wanted good handling to dispose of any opponent in southern India.

The foregoing observations on the native armies of this period may help to explain the rapidity with which the English won their earliest battles against Indian adversaries, and made their first conquests in the sea-board provinces, especially in Bengal. They had only to upset a few unstable rulers of foreign descent, whose title rested on dexterous usurpation, and to disperse by their trained battalions, European and native, great bodies of hired troops who had usually no interest in the war beyond their pay. Between the Marathas, who were spreading over the country from the west, and the Afghans, who had broken in from the north, the inland country was being ruined by rapine and exactions, trade and cultivation had fallen low, and the position of

[1] *East India Records* ...

the minor native powers was so unsteady [illegible] tary weakness and financial embarrassments [illegible] them might be destroyed by the loss of one [illegible] or even a single battle. But this course of [illegible] on the outskirts of India did not last long; for we shall see that as the English penetrated further into the interior their progress became very much slower, was indeed for a time arrested On the west coast they were already confronted by rivals very different from an incapable Bengalee Nawab--by the Marathas, whose power had considerable national character, some political stability, and formidable military organization. Under their great Peshwa, Balaji Bala Rao, they were now attaining the zenith of their predominance, they had conquered great territories, they were pushing forward into north India, they were supreme in the central regions, and while one army was dismembering the Nizám's State, another was extorting heavy subsidies in the Carnatic and Mysore Their operations had hitherto been very serviceable to the English, with whom they were at this time often in alliance, by weakening all the Mahomedan rulerships, and particularly by checking Bussy's military domination at Hyderabad

On the whole there is good ground for the opinion that if at the time of the dissolution of the Moghul empire India had been left to herself, if the Europeans had not just then appeared in the field, the whole of southern and central India would have fallen under the Maratha dominion[1] It was very fortunate for the English that they did not come into collision with [illegible]

[1] 'We look upon the Morattoes to be more than a match for the whole (Moghul) empire, were no European force to interfere.'—*Letter from the President and Council of Madras*, October, 1756.



m John Murray

[illegible] until their own strength had matured; since there can be no doubt that throughout the later stages of the tournament for the prize of ascendancy between England and the native Powers, our most dangerous challengers were the Marathas.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SITUATION IN BENGAL

SECTION I *Physical characteristics of the Province.*

CLIVE'S victory in 1757 was followed by the military occupation of Bengal, which had an immense and far-reaching effect upon the position of the English in India Our resources were so considerably increased that the defeat of the French in the Peninsula became thenceforward certain, for while Lally was cut off by sea and vainly attempting to support himself along a strip of sea-coast, the English had their feet firmly planted in the Gangetic delta and the rich alluvial districts of the lower Ganges The word Bengal must be understood, here and hereafter, to signify the great territory which includes the three provinces of Bengal, Behár, and Orissa, which were all under the rulership of the Nawab Surâj-ud daulah The subordination of the Bengal Nawabs to the English at once extended our predominance north-westward as far as the banks of the Ganges opposite Benares The capital of our political dominion was thenceforward established at Calcutta.

This transfer of the headquarters of the Company's government to Calcutta marks a notable step forward, since it was from Bengal, not from Madras or Bombay, that the English power first struck inland into the heart

of the country, and discovered the right road to supremacy in India. To advance into Bengal was to penetrate India by its soft and unprotected side. From Cape Comorin northward along the east coast there is not a single harbour for large ships, nor are the river estuaries accessible to them But at the head of the Bay of Bengal we come upon a deltaic low-lying region pierced by the navigable channels which discharge through several mouths the waters of great rivers issuing from the interior Some of these are merely huge drains of the water-logged soil others are fed by the Himalayan snows On this section, and upon no other of the Indian seaboard, the rivers are wide water-ways offering fair harbourage and the means of penetrating many miles inland, while around and beyond stretches the rich alluvial plain of Bengal, inhabited by a very industrious and unwarlike people, who produce much and can live on very little

All authorities agree that in the eighteenth century the richest province of all India, in agriculture and manufactures, was Bengal Colonel James Mill, in his already quoted memoir, points out that it has vast wealth and is indefensible towards the sea 'The immense commerce of Bengal,' says Verelst in 1767, 'might be considered as the central point to which all the riches of India were attracted Its manufactures find their way to the remotest parts of Hindostan.' It lay out of the regular track of invasion from central Asia, and remote from the arena of civil wars which surged round the capital cities of the empire, Agra, Delhi, or Lahore For ages it had been ruled by foreigners from the north, yet it was the province most exposed to maritime attack, and the most valuable in every respect to a sea-faring and commercial race like

the English. Its rivers lead like main ... the heart of India. From Bengal north-westward the land lies open, and, with few interruptions, almost ... expanding into the great central plain country that we now call the North-West Provinces and Oudh, and further northward into the Punjab up to the foot of the Himalayan wall Whoever holds that immense interior champaign country, which spreads from the Himalayas south-eastward to the Bay of Bengal, occupies the central position that dominates all the rest of India; and it may accordingly be observed that all the great capital cities founded by successive conquering dynasties have been within this region

Looking now at the map of India, we perceive that upper or continental (as distinguished from peninsular) India has been divided off from the rest of Asia by walls of singular strength and height The whole of the Indian land frontier is fenced and fortified by mountain ranges, and where, in the south-west towards the sea, the mountains subside and have an easier slope, the Indian desert is interposed between the outer frontier and the fertile midland region It is as if Nature, knowing the richness of the land and the comparative weakness of its people, had taken the greatest possible pains to protect it, for along the whole of that vast line of mountain wall which overhangs the north-west and the northern boundaries of India there are only a very few practicable passes These are the outlets through Afghanistan, by which Alexander the Great and all subsequent invaders have descended upon the low country; and any one who, after traversing the interminable hills and stony valleys of Afghanistan, has seen, on mounting the last ridge, the vast plain of India spreading out before him in dusky haze like a sea, ...

imagine the feelings with which such a prospect was surveyed by these adventurous leaders when they first looked down on it from the edge of the Asiatic highlands. Along the whole northern line of frontier the Himalayas are practically impassable; for the chain of towering mountains is backed by a lofty table-land, rising at its highest elevation to nearly 17,000 feet, which projects northward into central Asia like the immense glacis of a fortress

Such are the natural fortifications of India landward. But an invader landing on the seaboard takes all these defences in reverse He enters, as has been said, by open ill-guarded water-gates, he can penetrate into the centre of the fortress, can march up inside to the foot of the walls, can occupy the posts, and turn the fortifications against others This is just what the English have accomplished between 1757 and 1849, during the century occupied by their wars with the native Powers in India. At the beginning of that period the conquest of Bengal transferred from southern India to that province the true centre of government and thus we emerge rapidly into a far wider arena of war and politics.

SECTION II *Internal Affairs and Administrative Confusion.*

For the English, after their victory at Plassey, the most urgent and important matter was the restoration of some regular administration They had invested Meer Jafir with the Nawábship under a treaty which bound him to make to them heavy money payments in compensation for their losses by the seizure of Calcutta and other factories, and for their war expenditure; agreeing in return to supply troops at the Nawáb's cost

whenever he should require them. The result was to drain the native ruler's treasury and at the same time to reduce him, for the means of enforcing his authority and maintaining his throne, to a condition of dependence upon the irresponsible foreigners who commanded an army stationed within his province Such a situation was by no means novel in India, where the leaders of well-disciplined troops are often as dangerous to their own government as to its enemies At this very time, indeed, Bussy with his French contingent at Hyderabad was in much the same position as Clive with his English levies in Bengal But when Lally had recalled Bussy from Hyderabad the power of the French disappeared from the Dekhan, and was soon after extinguished in their general discomfiture, while the English were now consolidating their supremacy over a kingdom that they had practically conquered

The difficulty of this consolidation was greatly enhanced by the perplexity and indecision of the English as to their actual situation in the country Although they were conquerors *de facto*, they neither could nor would assume the attitude of rulers *de jure*, they were merely the representatives of a commercial company with no warrant from their nation to annex territory, and obliged to pretend deference toward a native ruler who was really subservient to themselves Nothing more surely leads to misrule than the degradation of a civil government to subserve the will of some arbitrary force or faction within the State; and in Bengal the evils of precarious and divided authority were greatly heightened by special aggravations In the first place the Company and the Nawáb were equally hard pressed for money The Company were making large and emergent remittances to Madras for sustain-

ing the war against the French, and they were obliged, at the same time, to maintain an army of more than 6,000 men in Bengal. The Nawáb, who did not choose to place himself entirely at the mercy of his foreign allies by disbanding his own forces, was beset by mutinous bands claiming arrears that he could not pay Meanwhile he wanted troops to put down disorder within his territories and to repulse attacks from without; for some of the principal landholders were in revolt against him, the Marathas were threatening Bengal on the west, and the heir apparent of the Delhi emperor had appeared with a force in the north-western districts, on the pretext of reclaiming a province of his father's empire Secondly, the Company were not merely the Nawáb's too powerful auxiliaries, demanding a large share of his revenue as the price of their annual support, nor were they, like the Marathas or the Afghans, an army of occupation that might be bought out by disbursement of one huge indemnity. They represented an association which insisted upon regular remittances to Europe, their primary interests and objects were still commercial, and as soon as they found themselves irresistible they began to monopolize the whole trade in some of the most valuable products of the country By investing themselves with political attributes without discarding their commercial character, they produced an almost unprecedented conjunction which engendered intolerable abuses and confusion in Bengal.

This is the only period of Anglo Indian history which throws grave and unpardonable discredit on the English name. During the six years from 1760 to 1765, Clive's absence from the country left the Company's affairs in the hands of incapable and inexperienced chiefs, just at

the moment when vigorous and statesmanlike government was urgently needed. That Clive himself foresaw clearly that the system would not answer and would not last, is shown by his letter (1759) to Pitt, in which he suggested to the Prime Minister the acquisition of Bengal in full sovereignty by the English nation, promising him a net revenue of two millions sterling. In the meantime he had done what he could to revive internal order, and had forced the Delhi prince to evacuate the province The Dutch in Bengal, who naturally watched our proceedings with the utmost jealousy and alarm, were secretly corresponding with the Nawáb, and had brought over from Batavia a large body of troops When their armed ships were prohibited by the English from ascending the river they began hostilities, and were totally defeated by Colonel Forde in an action described by Clive's report as 'short, bloody, and decisive But after Clive s departure for England in 1760 the invasions from outside were renewed; and within Bengal the whole administration was paralyzed by acrimonious disputes between the Company's agents and the Nawab, who fought against his effacement, and was secretly corresponding with the Dutch. Being intent, as was natural, on asserting his own independent authority, he manœuvred to thwart and embarrass the Company, intrigued with their rivals, and did his best to disconcert their joint operations against the Marathas who were laying his country waste, since a defeat might at least help to shake off the English.

It followed that as neither party could govern tolerably, both soon became equally unpopular, and that during these years the country was in fact without an authoritative ruler For while the English traders garrisoned the country with a large body of well-paid

and well-disciplined troops, the whole duty of filling the military chest and carrying on an executive government fell upon the Nawâb, who was distracted between dread of assassination by his own officers and fear of dethronement by the Company As the English traders had come to Bengal avowedly with the sole purpose of making money, many of them set sail again for Europe as soon as they had made enough In the meantime, finding themselves entirely without restraint or responsibility, uncontrolled either by public opinion or legal liabilities (for there was no law in the land), they naturally behaved as in such circumstances, with such temptations, men would behave in any age or country Some of them lost all sense of honour, justice, and integrity, they plundered as Moghuls or Marathas had done before them, though in a more systematic and business-like fashion, the eager pursuit of wealth and its easy acquisition had blunted their consciences and produced general insubordination As Clive wrote later to the Company, describing the state of affairs that he found on his return in 1765, 'In a country where money is plenty, where fear is the principle of government, and where your arms are ever victorious, it was no wonder that the lust of riches should readily embrace the proffered means of gratification,' or that corruption and extortion should prevail among men who were the uncontrolled depositaries of irresistible force This universal demoralization necessarily affected the revenues, and exasperated the disputes between the Company and Meer Jafir by increasing the financial embarrassments of both parties For the Nawab showed very little zeal in providing money for the troops upon whom rested the Company's whole power of overruling him, and arrears were accumulating dangerously

At last the President and Council [illegible] an end to these dissensions by removing [illegible] An understanding was arranged with Meer Kásim, [illegible] Diwán or chief finance minister, whereby he undertook to provide the necessary funds as a condition of his elevation to the rulership in the place of Meer Jáfir, who was dispossessed by a bloodless revolution. But as the new Nawab had gained his elevation by outbidding his predecessor, this rackrenting revolution only made matters infinitely worse, for Meer Kásim's performances fell far short of his promises, the quarrels grew fiercer, and nothing was done to remedy the disorganization that was wrecking the administration and emptying the treasuries The land revenue continued to decrease; commercial intercourse with upper India was checked by the insecurity of traffic, while the English Company were using their political ascendancy not only to insist upon their privileged monopoly of the export trade to Europe, but also to enforce an utterly unjust and extravagant claim for special exemption from all duties upon the internal commerce of Bengal In the assertion of this pretension the Company's servants, native as well as English, set at nought the Nawáb's authority, and their factories were in arms against his revenue officers

All this violent friction soon culminated in an explosion, brought about by an awkward attempt on the part of Mr Ellis, chief of the Patna factory, to seize Patna city, with the object of forestalling an attack by the Nawab on his factory Although Ellis took the place he could not hold it, and his whole party were captured in their retreat, but the Company's troops marched against and defeated the Nawáb, who in his furious desperation caused his English prisoners to be massacred

[illegible] fled across the frontier to the camp of the Vizier of Oudh. The Company, somewhat sobered by these tragic consequences of misrule, relinquished the more scandalous monoplies and restored Meer Jáfir in 1763. When he died in 1765 the ruinous system of puppet Nawabs came practically to an end; for in that year Lord Clive, who had returned to India, assumed, under a grant from the Delhi emperor, direct administration of the revenue of the three provinces of Bengal, Behár, and Orissa, an office that was entitled the Diwáni. The Diwán had been originally the Controller-General on behalf of the imperial treasury in each province, with supreme authority over all public expenditure, so that the investiture of the Company with this office added the power of the purse to the power of the sword, and rendered them directly and regularly responsible for the most important departments of government.

SECTION III *External Politics*

We must now turn from internal affairs to the foreign relations of the East India Company and the general aspect of Indian politics. The Vizier of Oudh, when Meer Kásim took refuge with him, had in his camp the titular emperor of Delhi, and he thought the opportunity favourable for an expedition into the Bengal provinces with the professed object of restoring the imperial authority, but really with the intention of annexing such territory as he could seize. At Buxar, on the Ganges, he was met and signally defeated by the Company's troops under Major Hector Munro, in an engagement of which the eventual and secondary consequences were very important[1]. The success of the English brought

[1] Battle of Buxar, September, 1764.

the emperor into their camp, intimidated the Vizier, carried the armed forces of the Company across the Ganges to Benares and Allahabad, and acquired for them a new, advanced, and commanding position in relation to the principalities north-west of Bengal, with whom they now found themselves for the first time in contact. By this war the English were drawn into connexion with upper India, and were brought out upon a scene of fresh operations that grew rapidly wider

At this point, therefore, it will be useful to sketch in loose outline the condition, in the middle of the last century, of that vast tract of open plain country, watered by the Jumna the Ganges, and their affluents, which stretches from Bengal north-westward to the Himalayas, and which is now divided into the three British provinces of Oudh, the North-West Provinces, and the Punjab. Throughout this vast region the flood of anarchy that had been rising since Aurangzeb's death was now at its height, and as the struggle over the ruins of the fallen empire was sharpest at the capital and the centres of power, the districts round Delhi and Agra, Lucknow and Benares were perhaps more persistently fought over than any other parts of India Two centuries of systematic despotism had long ago levelled and pulverized the independent chiefships or tribal federations in these flat and fertile plains, traversed by the highways open to every successive invader So when the empire toppled over under the storms of the eighteenth century, there were no local breakwaters to check the inrush of confusion The Marathas swarmed up, like locusts, from the south, and the Afghans came pouring down from the north through the mountain passes,

Within fifty years after the death of Aurangzeb, who was at least feared throughout the length and breadth of India, the Moghul emperor had become the shadow of a great name, a mere instrument and figure-head in the hand of treacherous ministers or ambitious usurpers All the imperial deputies and vicegerents were carving out for themselves independencies, and striving to enlarge their borders at each other's expense

We have seen that the Nizam, originally Viceroy of the Southern Provinces, had long ago made himself *de facto* sovereign of a great domain In the north-west the Vizier of the empire was strengthening himself east of the Ganges, and had already founded the kingdom of Oudh, which underwent many changes of frontier, but lasted a century. Rohilcund had been appropriated by some daring adventurers known as Rohillas (or mountain men) from the Afghan hills; a sagacious and fortunate leader of the Hindu Jats was creating the State of Bhurtpore across the Jumna river, Agra was held by one high officer of the ruined empire, Delhi, with the emperor's person, had been seized by another, the governors sent from the capital to the Punjab had to fight for possession with the deputies of the Afghan ruler from Kabul, and against the fanatic insurrection of the Sikhs These were, speaking roughly, the prominent and stronger competitors in the great scramble for power and lands; but scarcely one of them (except the Sikhs) represented any solid organization, political principle, or title Most of the rulerships depended on the personality of some chief or leader, who was raised more by the magnitude of his stakes than by the style of his play above the common crowd of plunderers and captains of soldiery. Any one who had money or credit might buy at the

imperial treasury a Firman authorizing him [illegible] the revenue of some refractory district. If he [illegible] the resistance of the landholders, the district [illegible] became his domain, and as his strength increased he might expand into a territorial magnate; if the peasants rallied under some able headman and drove him off, their own leader often became a mighty man of his tribe, and founded a petty chiefship or a ruling family. The traces of this chance medley and fluctuating struggle for the possession of the soil or of the rents were visible long afterwards in the complicated varieties of tenure, title, and proprietary usage that made the recording of landed rights and interests so perplexing a business for English officials in this part of India.

The English reader may now form some notion of the distracted condition of upper India when the Marathas invaded it in 1758, with a numerous army intended to carry out definite plans of conquest. The Moghul empire was like a wreck among the breakers; the emperor Álamgir, who had long been a State prisoner, had been murdered, and the strife over the spoils had assumed the character of a widespreading free fight, open to all comers. But as any such contest, if it lasts, will usually merge into a battle between distinct factions under recognized leaders, so the rapidly increasing power of the Marathas, who came swarming up from the south-west, and the repeated invasions from the north-west of Ahmed Shah the Abdallee with his Afghan bands, drew together to one or the other of these two camps all the self-made princes and marauding adventurers who were parcelling out the country among themselves. When in [illegible] Ahmed Shah brought an Afghan army to Delhi, he caused the office of prime minister to be conferred [illegible]

... on Nujib-ud-daulah, one of the few able ... nobles still attached to the Moghul government, who took a very leading part in subsequent events. At Lahore he appointed a viceroy to govern in his name the very important districts of the Punjab, and to keep open his communications

Having made these arrangements for maintaining his grasp on north India, the Afghan king had returned through the mountain passes to his own country The Marathas took advantage of his absence with characteristic audacity They were now overflowing all India upon a flood-tide of conquest and pillage, and the supreme control of their confederacy was in the hands of Bálaji Báji Rao, the ablest of those hereditary Peshwas or prime ministers who long kept their royal family in a State prison While this powerful and politic ruler was extending Maratha dominion in the centre of India, his brother Rughonath Rao led northward a large army, supported by the federal contingents of Holkar and Sindia Rughonáth Rao seized Delhi, expelled Nujib-ud-daulah, then marched swiftly with his light troops onward to Lahore, drove out the governor left there by Ahmed Shah, and substituted a Maratha administration in the Punjab

This achievement marks, as Grant Duff observes[1], the apogee of Maratha pre-eminence, 'the Dekhan horses had quenched their thirst in the waters of the Indus', but it also marks the turning-point and ebb of their fortunes. By such a bold stroke for the possession of north India, they over-reached themselves, for the effort drew them very far from their base; the Mahomedans were numerous and hardy in the north, and the Marathas had now provoked in

[1] *History of the Marathas.*

Ahmed Shah a much more formidable antagonist than any of those whom they had heretofore encountered. Their occupation of Delhi threatened all the Mahomedan princes of upper India, who saw that their only chance of preservation lay in a defensive alliance under some strong and warlike leader No exertions were spared by Nujib-ud-daulah to organize such a league under Ahmed Shah, nor did the Afghan chief hesitate to answer the summons of the Indian Musalmáns, or to resent the provocation he had received In the winter of 1759–60 he came sweeping down through the north-west passes into the Punjab, followed by all the fighting men of Afghanistan, he retook Lahore at a blow; drove all the Maratha officers out of the northern country, attacked Holkar and Sindia, who were plundering the districts further south, defeated one after the other with heavy loss, occupied Delhi, and continued his march south-eastward until he encamped on the Ganges The Peshwa despatched from Poona a very large force, under his eldest son Wiswas deo, to repair these losses and recover lost ground; it was joined by all the other Maratha commanders, while on the other side the Mahomedan leaguers united with the Abdallee.

When the next campaigning season began the two armies, after some negotiations and much manœuvring, finally met in January 1761 at Pániput, not far from Delhi. This was the greatest pitched battle that had been fought for several centuries between Hindus and Mahomedans Twenty-eight thousand Afghan horsemen rode with the Abdallee, whose army was brought up to a total of 80,000 horse and foot by large bodies of infantry from his own dominions, and by the contingents of the Indian Mahomedans. The regular troops of the Marathas were reckoned at

75,000 horse and 15,000 infantry; 15,000 Pindáris, or foraging freebooters, followed their standard; a countless swarm of armed banditti thronged their camp; and they had not less than 200 guns. The artillery on both sides included strong rocket batteries The Marathas, who issued at dawn out of their entrenched camp, at first carried all before their furious onset, they broke through the lines of Persian musketeers, camel gunners, and light cavalry The right wing of the Afghan army was thrown into confusion, its centre gave way under the crushing artillery fire Ahmed Shah's Vizier, who commanded the centre, threw himself from his horse and strove to rally his men on foot, crying to them that their country was far distant and that flight was useless, but to his rage and despair he found himself being overwhelmed by the torrent In this peril the Afghan king, very unlike the half-hearted Nawábs whom the English were routing further south, proved his courage and high military capacity With his right wing broken and his centre pierced, he checked or cut down the fugitives, brought up his reserves to the last man, and sent a strong reinforcement to his Vizier, with orders to make a desperate charge 'sword in hand, in close order, at full gallop' So the Vizier remounted, and went storming down right upon the Maratha centre under a shower of rockets The Marathas fought bravely for a short time, but their leader was killed, their line was broken, and they were utterly routed with enormous slaughter, for the pursuit was by swarms of cavalry over a level plain, and the exasperated peasants massacred the Marathas everywhere [1]

[1] We have a stirring description of this famous battle by a native eye-witness, who was with Ahmed Shah on the field. (*Asiatic Researches.*)

The Peshwa, alarmed by the news [illegible] situation in the north, was moving up from [illegible] and had reached the Nerbada river. There [illegible] brought to him a runner who was carrying a letter [illegible] some bankers at Pániput to their correspondents in the south. He opened it and read—'Two pearls[1] have been dissolved, twenty-seven gold mohurs lost, of the silver and copper the total cannot be reckoned'—an enigmatic message that told him of an immense political, military and family catastrophe He never recovered from the shock, which destroyed the baseless fabric of Maratha domination in northern India They might plunder towns, levy contributions, and even occupy some of the provinces for a time, but the fate of empires is decided by pitched battles, and in close lists the south-country freebooters would always go down before the hardier races of the north-west

Such a decisive victory has usually been followed in Asia by the rise of a new dynasty and the establishment of an extensive dominion Yet although the Marathas were clean swept out of northern India for the time, and although Ahmed Shah represented precisely the type of those Asiatic conquerors who had hitherto founded imperial houses at Delhi or Agra, it is a remarkable fact that the results of Pániput were quite disproportionate to the magnitude of the exploit. If Ahmed Shah had consolidated in the Punjab a powerful kingdom resting on Afghanistan beyond the Indus, and stretching southward down to Delhi and the Ganges, the history of India, and the fortunes of the English in that country, might have been very different But his troops, laden with booty, insisted on returning to their highlands, his western provinces,

[1] His son and cousin.

[illegible] were exposed to invasion and [illegible] India gradually slipped out of [illegible] The Punjab relapsed into confusion for [illegible] forty years, until it was temporarily con- [illegible] under the kingdom of Ranjit Singh Some [illegible] were made, subsequently to Ahmed Shah's retirement, into India from Afghanistan, but Ahmed Shah's withdrawal practically closed the long line of conquering invaders from central Asia, at a time very nearly simultaneous with the establishment in Bengal of the first conquerors that entered India by the sea

CHAPTER IX

THE MARATHAS AND MYSORE (1765–1770)

SECTION I. *Lord Clive's policy in Bengal* (1765–1767).

To return to the affairs of the East India Company. The Marathas, in spite of their overthrow at Pániput, were still the most active and dangerous of the native powers in India, but since they embodied the principles of insatiable aggression and of irreconcilable hostility to Mahomedan predominance, the universal dread of their predatory incursions united all other chiefs and princes, especially the Mahomedans, against them. The result was advantageous to the English, for it drew towards them those who drew away from the Marathas. The Vizier of Oudh, who had now become the leading Mahomedan prince in upper India, and who had been again repulsed in a second attempt upon Bengal in 1765, now showed himself very willing to conclude an alliance with the Company. Lord Clive, a statesman no less than a soldier, whose despatches show admirable foresight and solidity of judgment, had returned to India in 1765 vested with plenary authority to reform the internal administration and to make peace abroad. He found the springs of government clogged by indiscipline and corruption, he suppressed resolutely the most glaring abuses, he reconstructed the administration with remarkable ability; and by two

cardinal acts of public policy he settled the English dominion on a sure foundation within our territory and regulated our foreign relations

The first of these acts was his acceptance for the Company of the *Diwáni*, which was readily granted by the Emperor on the terms of payment to himself of 26 lakhs of rupees annually from the Bengal revenues, and the assignment to him of two districts beyond the Ganges The Company having thus acquired possession of the whole revenue of the provinces, were at once transformed from irresponsible chiefs of an armed trading association into responsible administrators, with a direct interest in abolishing the peculation, scandalous frauds, and embezzlement that were rife in the country The measure also put an end to the incessant disputes between the nominal government of the titular Nawáb of Bengal and the actual authority of the Company. 'The time now approaches,' wrote Clive, 'when we may be able to determine whether our remaining as merchants, subjected to the jurisdiction, encroachments, and insults of the Country Government, or the supporting your privileges and possessions by the sword are likely to prove more beneficial to the Company,—in other words, whether the Company should openly take up an attitude of independent authority And he decided, rightly, that nothing else would give them a stable or legitimate position They could not continue to maintain themselves by pulling the strings of native government, or by revolutionary methods whenever the machinery broke down, and as they could not abdicate power they were bound to take charge of its direction.

The second of Clive's measures was the conclusion of the alliance with Oudh. The war of 1764-65 had been disastrous to the Vizier, for his strong fortress

of Allahabad had been taken by the English [illegible] had also compelled him to withdraw from [illegible] Lucknow; and he had taken refuge with the [illegible]. It now lay with the Company to choose between annexing, by right of conquest, some of his important districts situated on their north-western frontier, or attaching the Vizier to their interests by reinstating him in this tract of country, which he held by a very dubious title, and from which he might have been easily ousted. Lord Clive adopted without hesitation the latter alternative, he restored the districts to Oudh upon the grounds that every motive of sound policy weighed against extending the territorial possessions of the Company. This decision, he found, 'disappointed the expectations of many, who thought of nothing but a march with the emperor to Delhi My resolution however was, and my hopes will be, to confine our assistance, our conquest, and our possessions to Bengal, Behár and Orissa. To go further is in my opinion a scheme so extravagantly ambitious and absurd, that no Governor and Council in their senses can adopt it, unless the whole system of the Company's interest be first entirely new re-modelled [1]' He therefore decided to maintain and strengthen Oudh as a friendly State interposed between Bengal and northern India And the barrier-treaty[2] framed upon this principle by Lord Clive constituted the basis of our foreign policy upon that frontier up to the end of the century.

It should be understood that the prime object of those who at this critical epoch directed the affairs of the English in India, was to place a limit upon the expansion of the Company's possessions, to put a sharp curb upon schemes of conquest, and to avoid any [illegible]

[1] *Committee Reports*, 393, vol iii.   [2] August, [illegible]

[illegible] with the native princes that might involve us in [illegible] war. But this was not because, as some have thought, the Company did not see whither they were drifting; it was because the outcome and irresistible tendencies of their situation were so clearly foreseen. To those who surveyed the prospect now before the English, and who could perceive that all the scattered fragments of the Moghul empire would be drawn by political gravitation towards any strong and coherent power, it was by this time plain that if the Company were ready to drop commerce for conquest, and to lay out another great dominion over the wide unoccupied spaces left by the subsidence of the Moghul empire, the site lay open for the builder, the work for those who could do it. In 1762, before the victory at Buxar, the Calcutta Council had sent home a project of despatching an army with the emperor to replace him on his throne at Delhi, and to extend our political influence throughout upper India. And after 1764, when our success against the Vizier of Oudh carried our arms beyond Bengal, it was clearly seen by Clive that the next step forward would commit us to an enterprise from which there would be no further possibility of drawing back

'We have at last arrived,' he wrote in 1765 'at that critical period which I have long foreseen, that period which renders it necessary to determine whether we can or shall take the whole to ourselves Jáfir Ali Khan (the Nawáb of Bengal) is dead, and his natural son is a minor, Sujah Daulah (Vizier of Oudh) is beat from his dominions, we are in possession of it, and it is scarcely hyperbole to say that to-morrow the whole Moghul empire is in our power. The inhabitants of the country have no attachment to any obligation; their forces are neither disciplined, commanded, nor paid as ours are. Can it then be doubted that a large army of Europeans would effectually preserve us sovereigns, not only holding in awe the attempts of any country prince, but rendering

us so truly formidable that no French, Dutch, or other enemy will presume to molest us?'

With this remarkable forecast of the possibilities which Clive earnestly counselled his employers to avoid, may be compared an extract from the concluding pages of Dow's history of Hindusthán, written in 1770, to show how accurately the possibilities of expansion had been calculated by cool and intelligent observers—

'Thus we have in a few words endeavoured to give a general idea of the present state of Hindusthán It is apparent, from what has been said, that these immense regions might all be reduced by a handful of regular troops Ten thousand European infantry, together with the Seapoys in the Company's service, are not only sufficient to conquer all India but, with proper policy, to maintain it for ages as an appendage to the British Crown. This position may at first sight appear a paradox to people unacquainted with the genius and disposition of the inhabitants of Hindusthán; but to those who have considered both with attention, the thing seems not only practicable but easy'

And so, indeed, the thing turned out to be; for Dow's political speculations have been literally verified by the result, although his estimates of the military strength required, being founded on experience of warfare in south India and Bengal, are undoubtedly low. We see, therefore, that in the deliberate opinion of the best judges of the political situation, the English in India were already so strong that no opposition from the native powers could prevent their acquiring complete ascendancy The enterprise was within their capacity, provided that no foreign rival again interfered; the only serious impediment lay in the not yet impossible reappearance on the scene of some other European nation, or of some powerful invader from central Asia, who might establish himself in upper India while the English were still near the coasts But all risk of transmarine intrusion had ceased for the time with

the dislodgement of the French; and the well-trodden path of invasion through Afghanistan, which had been used for two thousand years by conquerors from Alexander the Great to Ahmed Shah Abdallee, was at last rapidly closing. Ahmed Shah had now founded the dynasty of the Amirs, who have for nearly one hundred and fifty years been the chiefs of a group of tribes firmly planted in the mountains and valleys of Afghanistan This rugged highland country blocks all the roads from the Oxus and north-eastern Persia into India, it is a country of free and martial races, strong enough to make a great civilized State think twice before attacking them, too weak and poor to give more than occasional annoyance to well-guarded frontiers

It may be added that the north-western gates of India were soon to be double-locked against outside invasion For while this independent Afghan kingdom formed an excellent barrier against all attempts to break into India from Central Asia by the only land routes through which an army can enter, the Afghans themselves were about this time barred off from the Punjab by the Sikhs The rapid expansion of the power of the Sikhs, who are Hindu sectaries illustrates the almost invariable process by which in Asia every great proselytizing movement tends to acquire a political and militant character The two tendencies of course interact on each other, for while a religious revival is sure to rally under its flag a good deal of political discontent, on the other hand civil commotions usually set up the standard and appeal to the sanction of religious enthusiasm Towards the end of the last century the votaries of the Sikh faith, fanatically hostile to Islam, and in open revolt against their Mahomedan rulers, were gathering into a close association, whose

stubborn fighting qualities and rapid political development under military chiefs were extending their power across upper India from the Sutlej to the Indus. They were thus erecting a second and inner barricade against inroads from Central Asia, which cut off the communications between Islam in India and the rest of the Mahomedan world

Then below the Sutlej river, further to the south-east, there was a belt of Mahomedan principalities extending from Delhi to beyond Lucknow, holding all the rich central districts along the Jumna and Ganges, but threatened on the north and west by the Sikhs and Marathas Of these principalities by far the most considerable was Oudh, whose territory covered the whole north-western flank of the Company's possessions in Bengal We have seen that in 1765 a treaty of alliance was concluded with Oudh by Lord Clive, and as he at the same time contented the impoverished Moghul emperor by an ample allotment of revenue, the English had for the time nothing to fear from that quarter Thus the jealousies and religious animosities of all these States, Hindu and Mahomedan, in north-western India constituted a kind of balance of power which, in addition to the politic alliances made by Lord Clive, explains the almost entire immunity from disturbance on their Bengal frontier enjoyed by the English for the next forty years.

SECTION II *The Marathas and Hyder Ali in the South* (1767–69).

The year 1765, therefore, when we became in this manner firmly settled in Bengal, marks a halting-place in the onward movement of our territorial expansion. Lord Clive so far succeeded in his intention 'absolutely

to bind our possessions and conquests to Bengal[1],' that our frontiers as then fixed by him did not materially advance until the end of the century, when the irruptions of the Marathas into the plains of northern India upset the equipoise that had preserved us from molestation. But the intervening period was by no means one of peace and tranquillity for the English in India On the contrary, it was a time of constant war that severely strained our resources and occasionally placed our dominion in some jeopardy After 1765 the scene shifts again, the stress of our contest with the native powers falls backward towards Madras and Bombay, the centres of urgent political pressure move for a time southward to the peninsula and towards the western seaboard, the conflicts that check and retard our expansion are against the Marathas in the centre of India and the Mahomedan rulers of Mysore

The character and constitution of these two powers rendered them much more substantial antagonists than those whom the English had hitherto encountered in the Indian field The incessant warfare prevailing throughout India during the past thirty years, and the great prizes that might be won by the sword, had brought into the arena a stronger class of combatants than most of the men who at the beginning of the empire's dissolution had found themselves by birth or accident in the front rank Of this stronger class was Hyder Ali of Mysore, a man of great natural genius, who had raised himself entirely by superior daring, military instincts, and a faculty of managing the mercenary bands that were always attracted to the standard of a famous and fortunate leader Of the same class were the chiefs or leaders of tribes, communities, or

[1] Letter to Directors, 1765

military association—like the Marathas, the Jats of Bhurtpore, the Sikhs of the Punjab, or the Rohillas—united by the tie, real or assumed, of common race, religion, or country, and drawn together for defence or attack into compact organizations upon a kind of national or territorial basis. Such groups were liable to be weakened by internal feuds and dissensions. But as they had some genuine root in the soil and a true bond of popular union, they have always possessed a higher vitality and much stronger resisting capacity than the forces of even such an able military despot as Hyder Ali of Mysore, with whom we began our new series of wars in the south. A skilful commander of mercenary troops may often be hard to beat in a single battle; but it will be found, speaking broadly, that all the really hard fighting done by the Anglo-Indian army has been against tribal or quasi-national associations,—against Marathas, Sikhs, Jats, or Afghans.

It was with the greatest reluctance that the English East India Company, after their acquisition of Bengal, set out again upon the road of political adventure and military expeditions. In a letter of 1767 to their President at Calcutta the London Directors say—

'The Dewanni of Bengal, Bahár, and Orissa, are the utmost limits of our view on that side of India. On the coast the protection of the Carnatic and the possession of the Sircars . . . and on the Bombay side the dependencies thereon, with Salsette, Bassein, and the Castle of Surat. If we pass these bounds we shall be led from one acquisition to another, till we shall find no security but in the subjection of the whole, which, by dividing your force, would lose us the whole, and end in our extirpation from Hindusthan.'

This letter had been written on receipt of intelligence that had alarmed and displeased the Honourable Court

The situation of the English on the south-east coast, although the French had been dislodged, was still far from secure. In Bengal the English were recognized masters of a rich inland province, free from any fear of attack by sea, and with their land frontier sheltered on its open side behind the allied kingdom of Oudh. But in Madras our territory ran along the sea-coast, and was only covered landward by an indefinite kind of protectorate over the Carnatic principality, then under the rulership of a not very trustworthy Nawáb. Two warlike and restless neighbours, Hyder Ali and the Marathas, hovered ominously about our borders; while our only ally, the Nizam of Hyderabad, was embarrassed and wavering politically

Hyder Ali was the son of a soldier who had risen out of the crowd of common mercenaries to a petty command, and he himself had pushed his own fortunes much further by the ordinary method of employing his troops first in the service of a native State and afterwards in the prosecution of his own independent ambition He had thus gained notoriety as a military leader, and having secured a great treasure at the sack of Bednur he had made himself master of Mysore, an ancient Hindu principality lying due west of Madras From Mysore he had pushed his conquest still further westward to the sea-coast of Malabar, and he was now seizing land in South India wherever he could lay hands on it The superior craft and courage that he displayed began to alarm his neighbours, most of whom were engaged in similar proceedings. His principal enemies were the Marathas, with whom he had some sharp conflicts, and the Nizam of Hyderabad, from whose state he was tearing off large strips of territory, while from Mysore he was

threatening the Carnatic, which the Madras government were seriously concerned to protect.

It was just about this time that Lord Clive, in settling the affairs of Bengal with the emperor Shah Álam, obtained from him a formal grant of the districts to the north of Madras called the Five Sirkars, which had been assigned by the Nizám to the French, and out of which the English had driven Bussy's garrisons in 1759 The grant cost nothing to an emperor whose sovereignty had become purely nominal, but these districts, though under British occupation since they had been taken from the French had never been formally ceded to us by the Nizam, who not unreasonably took offence at the transaction However, being in straits for money and in fear of Hyder Ali, the Nizam was soon pacified by a treaty under which the Madras government pledged themselves rather vaguely to support him in case of war They also entered into a friendly arrangement with a marauding Maratha chief, who had hired out 10,000 horsemen to the Nizám. Scarcely had the treaty been signed, when Hyder Ali poured a large force into the Hyderabad territory; whereupon the Nizam, acting upon the agreement, at once demanded and obtained from Madras a contingent of troops Meanwhile the Maratha chief plundered the Mysore districts on his own account until Hyder Ali bought him off, when he departed home with his booty to evade the Nizam's claim for a share in it. The Nizam next marched, attended by the Madras contingent, toward Mysore, but instead of fighting he came to a private understanding with Hyder Ali, according to which both turned upon the Company. Some sharp skirmishing followed, in which the Nizám was so roughly handled by the English that he was

glad to make terms separately; and the war was pressed against Hyder Ali alone, who soon proved himself an antagonist much more adroit and active than the ordinary Indian princes of whom the Company had military experience.

The campaign was very ill managed from Madras, the commanding officer was hampered by 'field deputies' to superintend his movements, and by roguish contractors, while the Marathas took the opportunity of making a plundering tour in the Carnatic. Nor was it until the country had been overrun by the Mysore cavalry close up to the outskirts of Madras, and the finances of the Company considerably deranged, that a protracted and inglorious war was ended in 1769 by a treaty with Hyder Ali, who had taken up his quarters at St. Thomas' Mount, five miles from the English capital. The revenues of Madras would have been completely exhausted, if they had not been supplemented liberally, during the campaign, from Bengal, and the London Directors were exceedingly displeased at discovering that the money on which they relied for commercial investments in India, and for accommodating His Majesty's Ministers with treasury loans at home, had been dissipated in these barren operations, with no other profit than a practical lesson in the ways of Oriental statecraft and the value of Eastern allies. Moreover, if the beginning of the war was a political blunder, another and worse one was made in ending it. The treaty described all the contracting parties, of whom the principal were the English, Hyder Ali, and the Marathas, as reciprocally friends and allies of each other, provided that they did not become aggressors against one another; so that each party incurred a loose and vaguely worded

obligation of assisting the others in the event of future hostilities. And as a similar compact had been made with the Nizam, the position of the Madras government was that they had become liable to be called upon to assist any of three turbulent princes whenever the next quarrel should break out among them. Accordingly, when in the following year the Marathas and the Mysore ruler came to blows, each of these two treaty-parties demanded aid from the English, and each of them proved indisputably that his enemy was the aggressor. The Madras government, having been sharply censured by the Directors for the last war, and being in no way anxious to strengthen either of these two very formidable neighbours at the expense of the other, were compelled to offend both of them by refusing to interfere in any manner whatever The result was that the Marathas inflicted upon Hyder Ali some humiliating defeats, which he attributed to the faithless desertion of him by the English, and that he became thenceforward a vindictive enemy, waiting for an occasion, which he soon found, of gratifying his resentment.

CHAPTER X

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

SECTION I *Parliamentary Enquiries*

WE have now reached the threshold of that important period in the political history of British India which is covered by the long government of Warren Hastings, from 1772 to 1785 It was in this period that the contest for supremacy between the English and the military powers of India began in earnest, that the attention of Parliament became fixed upon Indian affairs, and that the organization of English government in India was for the first time seriously attempted

When Lord Clive left in 1767 the Company had become the real rulers of Bengal, but although their position was still dissembled under the cloak of a nominal Nawabship, the disguise was almost worn threadbare In Calcutta and Madras the Presidency Councils were exercising some direct authority beyond the town limits, and very large indirect power, as commanders of the troops and collectors of the revenue, throughout Bengal and the Carnatic Yet in Bengal, although the whole public income was paid to the Company, they were under strict orders from London to abstain from all open interference with the rest of the administration. They disbursed to a Deputy Nawab

(for the Nawâb himself was now a mere pensioner) the costs of establishments, and they left the whole executive and judicial government nominally in his hands. Verelst, who succeeded Clive at Calcutta, writes that the President and Council 'are repeatedly and peremptorily forbidden to avow any public authority in our names over the native officers, and enjoined to retain our primitive characters of merchants with the most scrupulous delicacy.' The consequences were but too evidently exemplified in the decline of commerce and cultivation, the diminution of specie, and the general distress, for the native officers were uncontrolled, while the Company received an immense revenue without possessing the means of protecting the people who paid it. Against such a system Verelst protested generously; and a futile attempt to mitigate its evils was made by appointing a few English servants of the Company to supervise the native agency

It was not, however, until 1773 that the executive and judicial administration of the country was placed on a regular, though imperfect footing, by parliamentary ordinance. Up to this time Anglo Indian annals have recorded the vicissitudes of a contest, first, between commercial companies, next, between maritime nations, latterly between one powerful Company representing the successful nation, and the native Indian princes. This latest stage of the contest was in reality no more than a part of the general disorderly conflict prevailing all over India, in which the weak fragmentary States that had at first been manufactured out of the provinces of the dismembered empire were now being in their turn trampled under the feet of hardier rulerships. The work of the English had hitherto been mainly destructive, because the exigencies of self-defence com-

pelled them to strike down their antagonists. But the era now opening will introduce their first essays at reconstruction, for in Bengal the English had by this time cleared for themselves a good political building site, and the chronicle of interminable straggling wars is henceforward to be varied by attempts at administrative organization.

In England, although State interference with private enterprise had never been a popular duty, there was growing up a conviction that it had become necessary to place the doings of the East India Company under national control The British people had at this time reached a very high degree of settled civilization under institutions that secured to them almost complete civil and religious liberty They found themselves involuntarily responsible for a country plunged into violent disorder, where no species of government except illimitable personal despotism, usually of foreigners, had been known for many centuries Into this country they had to import, from a great distance, the principles of civilized polity, so that their first experiment at regulating the affairs of Bengal may be regarded as the beginning of a vast constitutional innovation that has since been extended, with many mistakes and some mishaps, but in the end with remarkable success, throughout the whole of India

It was the astonishing acquisition of so rich a province as Bengal, and the discreditable sight of a few commercial agents handling the wealth of a kingdom, that roused the attention of the British Parliament and enforced the necessity of looking into the condition of affairs in India In 1765 Lord Clive had estimated the whole gross revenue of Bengal, from all sources, at four millions sterling, and the net income of the Company,

after payment of all expenses, at £[illegible] become the possessors of so magnificent a [illegible] Court of Directors were raising their dividend[illegible] stock went up to 267; their shareholders divided [illegible] per cent. in 1767; and their servants brought home large fortunes to be employed in buying country seats and parliamentary boroughs. Alderman Beckford expressed in the House of Commons his hope that the rich acquisitions of the Company in the East would be made a means of relieving the people of England from some of their burdens Nor was the British Government backward in acting upon the hint, since the system of granting renewals of the Company's charter for short periods afforded excellent opportunities of making fresh terms in proportion to the market price of the concession[1]

In 1766, upon an intimation from the Prime Minister that the affairs of the East India Company would probably occupy the attention of Parliament during the approaching session, there ensued a long bargaining discussion between the Government and the Company, which produced a law binding the Company for a term of years to pay £400,000 annually to the Crown, 'in

[1] The earliest legislative recognition of the East India Company was in 1698, when the New Company, having been incorporated by Act of Parliament, advanced to the Government, at 8 per cent. the sum of . £2,000,000

In 1702 the United Companies advanced another million without interest . £1,000,000

Making the sum due with arrears £3,200,000

In 1730 the Company advanced . £400,000

In 1744, on further prolongation of the Charter at 3 per cent . . £1,000,000

In 1750 the debt was taken at £4,200,000, and the interest on the whole was fixed at 3 per cent It was funded in 1793. The annual payment of £400,000 was a separate transaction from these loans.

[illegible] territorial acquisition and revenue lately [illegible] by them in the East Indies.' From a subsequent enquiry it appeared in 1773 that the Company's [illegible] expenses had increased since the year 1765 from [illegible] to the enormous sum of £1,700,000. It also appeared that from 1765 the British Government had received by the net customs duties, the indemnity upon tea, and the yearly payment of £400,000, little less than two millions annually from the Company[1], so that the British nation took heavy blackmail upon the Company's gains, however they may have been gotten. This yearly payment represented in fact the tribute or royalty levied by the State upon the great territorial revenues recently acquired by Clive's victories But with the possession of these revenues had come a change in the Company's commercial system, for in 1767 began the practice of making what were called Investments, that is, of employing a large portion of the surplus public revenue collected from the province in buying goods, raw produce and manufactures, for exportation to Europe It followed, as Burke said that whereas in other countries revenue arises out of commerce, in Bengal the whole foreign maritime trade, of which the Company had a monopoly, was fed by the revenue The consequence of this steady drain upon the production of the country soon began to be felt. Moreover, after Clive's departure from India in 1767, the withdrawal of his resolute clearheaded dictatorship was immediately felt throughout all departments of the administration; official discipline became again relaxed; the finances suffered a relapse into extravagance and malversation, and the agents of government still meddled in private trade The Madras Presidency

[1] *Annual Register*, 1773, p. 76.

drifted into that ruinous war with Hyder Ali that has been already described; and in 1770 a terrible famine had desolated Bengal. Under the system of annual elections to the Directorship the Company at home were demoralized by party contests and violent internal dissensions. Yet notwithstanding all these concurrent evils and mishaps no serious enquiry was taken up in Parliament until the Company declared themselves to be not only unable to continue the annual tribute of £400,000, but also so overloaded with debt as to need a large loan from the English treasury. Instead of taking tribute or borrowing at easy rates, the British government was actually asked to lend money. Here was a scandalous confession of insolvency which naturally placed the misdoings of the Company before Lord North's ministry in a very different and much stronger light, arrested their earnest attention, and convinced them of the immediate necessity for radical reform

The general circumstances of the time, also, were bringing about changes and amendments Lord Clive said truly that the affairs of the East Indies were in fact partaking of the general confusion then spreading over the immense transmarine possessions of Great Britain, which had been acquired so recently and rapidly that there had been no time to set them in order. The English people had yet to discover the nature of their responsibility for the tutelage of subject or alien races, and for the proper management of countries differing so widely in origin, character, and situation as North American colonies and Indian provinces They had as yet no experience in the difficult art of ruling distant and diverse populations on so broad a scale Nor could the whole range of modern history furnish them with

any useful precedent, seeing that all previous experiments in the government of dependencies may be pronounced, by a very moderate standard of ethics and efficiency, to have failed. But the comparatively long interval of peace in Europe, so far as England was concerned, that followed the termination in 1763 of the Seven Years War, gave leisure and opportunity for looking into the state of our outlying property The nation began to take stock of the vast accession to its estate beyond sea which had been won by its naval and military successes, and the novel sense of duty towards India was undoubtedly stimulated by a general feeling that a trading association had no business with the revenues of a great kingdom

The urgency of the case, and certain symptoms of rising popular indignation, combined to press the Government into active interference with the Company, whose financial embarrassments left them in no position to resist an enquiry ordered by the House of Commons, or to dispute the right of the nation to deal as it chose with their territorial acquisitions They tried hard, then and afterwards, to shelter themselves from Parliamentary interposition under the shadow of the nominal sovereignty of the Delhi emperor, from whom they pretended to hold their land. In maintaining this doctrine they acted upon the advice of Lord Clive, who, although in 1765 he accepted the Diwani because the assumption of some kind of legitimate authority over Bengal was unavoidable, nevertheless still affirmed that for the Company to declare themselves politically independent was very far from expedient Consequently the law courts and the police were still in charge of native officers, superintended to some little extent by the Company's agents, but under separate judicial and

executive departments which the Company did not undertake to administer.

But the essence of executive government is to be one and indivisible, so that the machine will not run unless all the driving power centres ultimately under one prime mover, whether it be an autocratic prince or a democratic assembly. In Bengal the outcome of this divided responsibility after Clive's departure, was masterless confusion The magistracy, the police, and the revenue officers, being diverse bodies working upon different systems with conflicting interests under no common head, vied with each other in mismanagement; there were no positive laws and there was very little justice in the country Moreover, the three Presidencies made wars and alliances independently of each other: the Company's standing army in Bengal amounted to over 11,000 men, and the increased civil and military establishments involved expenditure that entrenched greatly upon the funds for commercial investment Fortunately this dilapidation of the Honourable Company's revenue produced a fall of their stock, which brought home to them a conviction that they were on the downward path to some distressing predicament They applied for financial assistance to the Ministers, who referred the Company to Parliament, and in January, 1772, the king's speech gave notice of an intention to look into their affairs The result was the appointment of two Select Committees 'to enquire into the state, nature, and condition of the Company, and of British affairs in the East Indies.'

It is true that the Parliament had hitherto been much more disposed to pass abstract resolutions than to affirm sovereign rights and to act upon them in India. When in 1762 the French negotiators for peace

manded restitution of districts that had been taken from them during the war, the English representatives met the claim by demurring to 'any right of the Crown of England to interfere in the legal and exclusive property of a body corporate' And subsequently Burke, being at the time not hostile to the Company, described their possessions as 'held in virtue of grants from the Delhi emperor, in the nature of offices and jurisdictions dependent on his Crown; a very anomalous species of power and property quite unknown to the ancient constitution of England' The East India Company, he observed, had usually dealt in a spirit of equal negotiation with the government for the renewal of their Charter, until the Minister (Lord North) set up the Crown's claim to their possessions, with the original idea of extracting money to pay off the civil list debts The Parliament asserted a judicial right to enquire into the question of title in order to alarm the Company[1] Burke's view then was that the terrors of a Parliamentary enquiry were hung over the Company mainly with the object of levying contributions for the Exchequer's benefit There was much truth in this, and it was partly as a set-off against those contributions that the Company were licensed to export duty free to North America the tea which the intractable colonists flung into Boston harbour. But Lord North, who now ruled both Houses with an overwhelming majority was adverse to the Company, the Committees brought up condemnatory reports; and the Commons passed resolutions declaring that all acquisitions made under the influence of a military force, or by treaty with foreign princes, do of right belong to the State A motion was made

[1] Observations on a Late State of the Nation

arraigning Clive's proceedings in Bengal as dishonourable and detrimental to the nation. Clive defended himself vigorously, laying about him on all sides, and the motion was rejected, without division, in favour of a resolution 'that Robert Lord Clive did render great and meritorious services to his country.' His death in the following year[1] closed the career of this high-spirited, courageous, indefatigable man, to whom above all others the English are indebted for the foundation of their empire in India. Never before or since has an Irish peerage been the cheap reward of such invaluable service to the nation. His daring and his sagacity, his singular talent for politics and his genius for war, produced in Lord Clive a rare combination of masculine qualities exactly fitted to the circumstances of his time in India.

SECTION II. *The first governing Constitution.*

Of the two Acts that were eventually passed in 1773, one enabled the Ministers to lend the Company £1,400,000 to discharge their obligations, the other changed the constitution of the Company, and gave a Parliamentary title to their administration in India. To these matters, to the re-arrangement of the governing body at home, and to the reform of the system abroad, the scope of Lord North's Regulating Act was carefully confined. The territorial acquisitions and revenues were still to be retained by the Company for the term of their charter, and the uncertain ground of sovereign prerogative was evaded by founding the enactment upon 'the eminent dominion of Parliament over every British subject in every concern.' The Courts of the Directors and Proprietors in London

[1] November, 1774.

were reconstituted upon a more oligarchic model by raising the money qualifications and reducing the numbers. In India the Governor-General and Council were established for Bengal (the first appointments to be made by Parliament) with a general authority over the three Presidencies, under a rule whereby a majority of votes in the Council determined all disputed questions. And a supreme Court of Justice, having a very ill-defined jurisdiction, was set up side by side with the Governor-Generalship in Calcutta

It is easy now to perceive that this ill-constructed governing machinery, which stands towards our latest systems in the same relation as does the earliest traction engine to the present locomotive, contravened some primary principles of administrative mechanics. When in Asia it becomes necessary to organize a new régime in a country acquired from a native ruler by cession or conquest the first thing needful is to fix the chief local authority, arming him with ample though well-defined powers, to be used in general subordination to the central government What these powers should be depends upon the circumstances of the case, upon the character of the people, the state of their society, and often upon the distance of the new province from headquarters The executive and judicial departments may be quite separate, or they may be more or less under the same superior control, in any case the jurisdictions, and the laws or rules applicable to the community, are plainly marked out and promulgated. In all cases due provision is made for empowering one chief governing person to decide at once, and on his own responsibility, in emergencies But in 1773 the chief executive authority at Calcutta was vested in a majority of the Council—the Governor-General having

only a casting vote—so that in a government where promptitude and unity of action were all-important every order was arguable, and where opinions differed no measure passed without violent controversy. Then the boundaries between the executive and judicial powers were also left to be discovered by incessant conflict, producing a kind of border warfare in which each party made encroachments and reprisals In the midst of all this turmoil the sovereign power remained ambiguous and formally in abeyance, and Parliament, the only umpire acknowledged by both sides, was at the distance of a six months' voyage

Thus the main obstacles to the smooth working of the new constitution were, first, the entire dependence of the Governor-General on the votes of his Council; secondly, the conflict of jurisdictions, and lastly, the want of a supreme legislative authority, nearer than England, to arbitrate in these quarrels and to mark off the proper sphere of the executive and judicial departments The Governor-General could make no laws that the judges condescended to notice On the other hand the judges claimed, upon one ground or another, a general power of entertaining complaints against the acts of the executive government and its officers, and of issuing orders tending to reduce the administration to the status of a subaltern agency, whose proceedings might be reviewed by the judges at their discretion. The capital question of sovereignty stood open to be explained theoretically according to the interests or contentions of either side It might be colourably argued, on the part of the Company, that they held the country by grants from the Delhi emperor and treaties with native princes, whereby the jurisdiction of the judges appointed by the King of England was

greatly restricted, and as it were cut off at base. Or it might be maintained that all the possessions of the Company fell naturally to the Crown, whence it followed that the writs of the Supreme Court ran wherever the Company exercised public authority, that the judges at Calcutta could control the native courts, and that the procedure of Westminster Hall was applicable to every Bengalee landholder For since jurisdiction was given by the statute over all servants of the Company, it was held by the Court that the whole body of landowners in Bengal, who collected the land revenue and paid over the State's share to the Company, might fall within their purview At any rate, if any one demurred to the jurisdiction, he was held bound to appear to plead his objection before the Judges, although the cost and trouble of answering a summons to Calcutta might be ruinous to a native at a distance in the interior districts, and totally ignorant of these technicalities

With a prolix and costly procedure, with strange unintelligible powers resembling the attributes of some mysterious divinity, the Supreme Court was soon regarded by the natives as an engine of outlandish oppression rather than as a bulwark against executive tyranny 'So far,' says Burke's Report, 'as your Committee have been able to discover, the Court has been generally terrible to the natives, and has distracted the government of the country without substantially reforming one of its abuses' In this atmosphere of doubt as to the country's ownership and its title deeds, and as to the limits of the two great administrative provinces, complications, acrimonious controversy, and even collisions necessarily ensued The Council and the Court were ranged in two hostile camps set over against each other on the borderland of debateable jurisdictions. The

Company's officers claimed illimitable [illegible] the people of Bengal in revenue matters; [illegible] affirmed the duty of protecting the people [illegible] injustice; and for either contention very fair [illegible] might be found. The Judges were quite as much [illegible] on asserting their own power as on protecting the natives of India, while to the Council any sort of control or check upon their fiscal operations was highly inconvenient The truth is that outside Calcutta there were at that period no laws at all, and that the Company had no regular authority and very little inclination to make any

Out of these causes and complications arose the celebrated disputes between Warren Hastings and his Council, which kept the Governor-General and his councillors at bitter feud with each other except when they united in a quarrel with the Supreme Court of Judicature These matters fall within the scope of this narrative only so far as they illustrate an early stage in the experimental process of adjusting English institutions to the conditions of an Asiatic dependency; for it is otherwise superfluous to tell over again an often-told story The system of administration set up by the Act of 1773 embodied the first attempt at giving some definite and recognizable form to the vague and arbitrary rulership that had devolved upon the Company. From that date forward this outline of Anglo-Indian government was gradually filled in The administrative centre was now at any rate distinctly located at Calcutta with the Governor-General as its acknowledged head, invested with the chief control of the foreign relations of the three Presidencies and deriving his authority from a statute of the English Parliament. Thus far the foundation had been laid on broad and

[illegible] lines; but the work of interior organization was scarcely begun, and it remained for Warren Hastings to persevere in building up the fabric of administration under the stress of discord in Council, political complications, foreign wars, and every kind of financial embarrassment.

CHAPTER XI

THE GOVERNOR GENERALSHIP OF WARREN HASTINGS (1774–1785)

SECTION I *The Rohilla War* (1774)

WARREN HASTINGS did not take his seat as first Governor-General in India until 1774; but from 1772, when he went to Calcutta as Governor of the Bengal Presidency, until his final departure in the spring of 1785, the whole course and character of Anglo-Indian history bear the impress of his personality, and are connected with his name

At the time of his taking office the power of the Marathas, which had been accumulating for a hundred years, was threatening every prince and State in India from the Sutlej river southward to Cape Comorin The shattering overthrow that they had suffered at Pánipat in 1761 had expelled them from the Punjab. Yet in western India they were supreme, in Rájputana and central India they plundered and ransomed at their leisure, and they were incessantly making predatory excursions north-eastward into the fertile plains watered by the Ganges and the Jumna, to harry the lands of the Oudh Vizier of Rohilcund, and of the Mahomedan chiefships about Delhi, Agra, and Allahabad Although the Maratha armies subsisted by freebooting, and their leaders were rough uneducated captains whose business it was to levy contributions and seize terri-

tory, their civil administration, especially the whole collection of revenue in conquered lands, was managed by Brahmins, by far the ablest class of officials then existing in India.* The Maratha tactics were to overrun a country with swarms of light horsemen, harassing and exhausting their opponents, exacting heavy contributions if they retired, or rackrenting the land scientifically if they settled down on it By this combination of skilful irregularity in war and methodical absorption of a country's wealth the leaders were able to keep on foot great roving armies, which were the terror of every other Indian power. The unwieldy State of Hyderabad, notwithstanding its size, was no match for them, they were too numerous and active even for such an eminent professor of their own predatory science as Hyder Ali of Mysore, and they descended annually, like a chronic plague, upon the Rohillas and the Oudh Vizier, who could barely hold against them the large provinces that they had secured out of the partition of the Empire. Everything pointed to the Marathas as destined to be the foremost rivals of the English in the impending contest for ascendancy And in fact no native power other than the Marathas did oppose any solid resistance to the spread of our dominion in upper India, until the Sikhs, long afterwards, crossed the Sutlej in 1845

When Warren Hastings assumed the government of Bengal in 1772, the different Maratha chiefs were just beginning to found separate rulerships, without abandoning their confederacy under the Peshwa And from 1774, during the whole of his Governor-Generalship, the state and course of the East India Company's foreign affairs were governed principally by our varying relations with these chiefs Hastings found that a Maratha army had made its annual irruption into the

districts north-west of Bengal, where the emperor Shah Álam, who had been living at Allahabad on the revenues assigned to him by Clive in 1765, solicited and obtained their assistance towards recovering his capital. Under their patronage he had been replaced on his throne in 1771, but the Marathas treated his kingship as a mere pageant, using his name as a pretext for seizing more districts, and leaving him almost destitute in the midst of a plentiful camp They were now swarming about the north country and rapidly gaining the upper hand of all the Mahomedan princes. What concerned the English more particularly, was that they were demanding, in the emperor's name, surrender of the districts of Kora and Allahabad which had been made over to him by Lord Clive in 1765, when the Diwáni of Bengal was granted to the Company For since these districts bordered on Bengal as well as on Oudh, their occupation by the Marathas would have been equally fatal to the security of both territories

On the northern frontier of Oudh, in the angle between the line of the Himalayas and the Upper Ganges, lay the country possessed by the Rohilla Afghans. This was a chiefship established about twenty-five years previously by an adventurer of reputed Afghan parentage, who had asserted his independence of the Moghul empire during the confusion caused by Ahmed Shah's earlier descent upon India It was now under a confederacy of which Hafiz Rehmat Khan was the leader, and it formed an important section of the general line of defence against the Marathas, who had broken through in 1771 and now reappeared in 1772. As Oudh covered the open side of Bengal, Rohilcund covered the exposed frontier of Oudh, so when the Rohillas implored the Vizier to succour them, the

[illegible] fearing for his own dominions, asked the English to cooperate against the common enemy. The Calcutta Government sent up an English Brigade under Sir Robert Barker, instructing him to make a demonstration in support of the Vizier, and to act generally on his side in any negotiations A treaty was arranged between the Vizier and the Rohillas, and attested by the English commander, whereby the Vizier agreed to drive off the Marathas on payment by the Rohillas of a stipulated subsidy. The Marathas soon afterwards retired of their own accord into quarters for the rainy season; but early in 1773 they again menaced Rohilcund, and this time the combined forces of Oudh, the Rohillas, and the English marched against them When they had been compelled to withdraw the Vizier demanded payment of his subsidy, but Háfiz Rehmat Khan, the principal Rohilla chief, sent evasive answers, whereupon the Vizier addressed himself to the English, whose commander had attested, though he had in no way guaranteed, the engagement

Out of these transactions arose the Rohilla War, which brought down such violent obloquy and so much loose parliamentary invective upon Hastings, against whom it has always been charged as a dark political crime. The whole situation was overspread by a network of transparent intrigue. The Vizier suspected that the Rohilla chiefs, who were a band of Afghan usurpers in an imperial province, might on emergency join the Marathas against him, nor indeed was there any particular reason why they should not do so, since the Vizier himself had been seriously meditating over a proposal from the Marathas that he should join them in an attack upon the Rohillas, and in making a partition of their country. But he was wise enough to see that

by joining a band of robbers to plunder his neighbour's house he would bring them the sooner to his own door, and on the whole he thought the safer step would be an alliance with the English, whose troops would make him sure of success in the field, and whose avowed interest lay in strengthening him as a barrier against the Marathas. The Vizier, therefore, at an interview with the Governor-General at Benares in 1773, desired the assistance of an English force to put him in possession of Rohilcund, alleging that the Rohillas had broken their treaty by withholding from him the subsidy, and promising liberal payment for the service To this proposition Hastings, after some deliberation and hesitation on both sides, finally consented. 'Our ally,' he wrote to his Council, 'would obtain by this acquisition a complete compact State shut in effectually from foreign invasions by the Ganges, while he would remain equally accessible to our forces either for hostility or protection It would give him wealth, of which we shall partake, and give him security without any dangerous increase of power, . by bringing his frontier nearer to the Marathas, for whom singly he is no match, it would render him more dependent on us and connect the union more firmly between us' Accordingly the united forces invaded Rohilcund in the spring of 1774, the Rohillas, who were well led and fought bravely, would soon have disposed of the Vizier's army, but they could not stand against the English troops, and after some gallant charges they were defeated Hafiz Rehmat Khan was killed fighting courageously at the head of his men, and the short-lived power of the Afghan confederacy was utterly broken. Rohilcund was annexed to the possessions of the Vizier, who thereby acquired the country lying east of the

upper Ganges up to the Himalayas, with a strong frontage on the river against attacks from the west.

The result, from the point of view of English political interests, was to complete our defensive position towards the north-west by substituting a safe and submissive ally for untrustworthy neighbours upon an important section of the barrier, and it is certain that the plan succeeded. For many years afterwards our north-west frontier remained undisturbed, until in the beginning of the nineteenth century the English took up ground beyond it Nevertheless this advantage was gained by an unprovoked aggression upon the Rohillas, who sought no quarrel with us, and with whom we had been on not unfriendly terms, nor is Warren Hastings' policy in this matter easily justifiable even upon the elastic principle that enjoins the governor of a distant dependency to prefer above all other considerations the security of the territory entrusted to him

SECTION II *War with the Marathas* (1776–1782), *and with Mysore* (1778–1783)

The Rohilla campaign was the only war directly planned and undertaken by Hastings, although he was constantly engaged during seven stormy years, beginning in 1776, with the support and supervision of military operations From this time forward up to the end of the century the battlefields are all in the west and south of India. In Bengal the subsidiary alliance with Oudh remained the cornerstone of our defensive system, nor was that province ever invaded, though often threatened, by the Maratha armies But in Bombay the President and Council, being anxious to distinguish themselves by the acquisition of territory—especially of Salsette, which is close to Bombay—entered into a

covenant with a Maratha chief named Ru[illegible] who had been ejected from power at Poona, [illegible] him at the head of the Maratha government, [illegible] for the cession, in return, of certain districts to the Company. The object of the Bombay President was to obtain political ascendancy at Poona and to make his Presidency pay its way by an increase of land revenue; but the plan was very badly laid, and the means adopted quite inadequate for the ends in view When the Calcutta government received from Bombay a copy of the treaty with Rughonath Rao, they at once condemned totally the measures that had been taken, declaring the war 'impolitic, dangerous, unauthorized, and unjust,' and protesting against the Bombay Presidency having imposed on itself 'the charge of conquering the whole Maratha empire for a man who appeared incapable of affording effectual assistance in the undertaking.' They foretold, rightly, that the enterprise would only embark them upon an indefinite sea of troubles. and they peremptorily ordered the Company's forces to be withdrawn if it could be done without danger. But before this letter could reach Bombay the expedition had started, Salsette and Bassein, two very important points, had been forcibly occupied, and we were committed to the war. At Arras was fought the first of that long series of battles between the English and the Marathas, almost all of which have been well and honourably contested The Bombay troops were obliged to fall back in disorder, losing many English officers who sacrificed themselves with their usual devotion in the attempt to rally their sepoys. It now seemed to Hastings impossible to make peace immediately and honourably, so he insisted that we must stand to our ground and face [illegible] reverses, reinforcements were sent across India, [illegible]

[illegible] were made of negotiation with the Marathas, [illegible] were justly incensed by these proceedings.

In this manner we became entangled in a long, costly, and unprofitable war, which may be taken to have been the original source of the interminable hostilities which occupied Hastings for the next seven years, straining his finances, damaging his reputation, distracting his administration, and bringing both Bombay and Madras at different moments into serious jeopardy Any attempt to give a brief and also intelligible narrative of the straggling inconclusive fighting that went on must inevitably fail. The essence of the whole matter is that the Marathas were at this period far too strong and too well united to be shaken or overawed by such forces as the English could despatch against them. They held in the centre of India a position which enabled them to threaten all the three divided English Presidencies, to intrigue successfully against us at Hyderabad and Mysore, and to communicate with the French by their ports on the western sea-coast The two minor Presidencies of Bombay and Madras were governed by rash incompetent persons who were exceedingly jealous of the Governor-General's superior authority, who disregarded his advice or orders, and thwarted his policy; while Hastings himself was hampered by opposition in his own Council and by enemies at headquarters in London. If he had been able to draw back at once out of the war, and to insist on making peace with the Marathas, he might have escaped the graver complications that followed upon the original blunder of attacking them But the English still held, and were determined to retain, Salsette and Bassein, and although Hastings sent an envoy to Poona, the refusal of the Marathas to cede these two valuable points protracted

negotiations up to the end of 1776, when a turn of European politics materially affected, as usual, the situation in India.

By this time the United States had declared their independence, and England had now become so deeply involved in the attempt to put down rebellion in North America, that the French determined to use such an apparently excellent opportunity of revenge for the injuries suffered during the Seven Years War. Providence, said the French minister in a secret State paper, has marked out this moment for the humiliation of England, and accordingly the colonists were actively though surreptitiously assisted by France, to a degree that made a rupture with that power unavoidable A French agent reached India in 1777 to propose alliance with the Marathas on conditions including the cession of a seaport on the west coast His overtures, which were naturally encouraged by the Peshwa at Poona, filled with alarm and indignation the English, to whom the actual state of affairs in Europe, India, and America rendered the prospect of such a combination exceedingly disagreeable. In the same year Hastings received secret information from the British embassy at Paris that the French were concerting a scheme for an expedition to India in support of our enemies there In 1778 came news that Burgoyne had surrendered to the Americans at Saratoga, and that France, probably also Spain, were declaring war, while already a French ship from Bourbon Island had actually landed officers and military stores on the south coast for Hyder Ali

Although at this moment the dissension between Hastings and Philip Francis in the Calcutta Council was fierce and bitter, yet the Governor General carried with a high hand his energetic measures for meeting

these dangers. All the French settlements in India were seized; a force was despatched from Bengal to reinforce Bombay, and under the stress of the emergency the Governor-General determined to throw aside a treaty just settled with the Marathas, and to sanction another march upon Poona in support of Rughonáth Rao. In modern times the device of supporting pretenders to a foreign throne has fallen into disuse among civilized States, even when they are at war, partly because international law disapproves, if it does not condemn, the proceeding, but mainly because a long series of experiments has proved that such enterprises only exasperate the enemy, and as political expedients are generally foredoomed to failure Yet in Europe it was once an ordinary method of vexing or weakening an antagonist, and in Asia it is still a very popular kind of adventure, while Anglo-Indian history contains several examples that are invariably warnings Thus the backing of Rughonath Rao for the Maratha premiership turned out a disastrous speculation, for the second expedition ended in ignominious failure Its leaders, civil and military, blundered signally and retreated disgracefully, the pretender fled back into exile, and nothing was gained except the just and enduring resentment of the Marathas The Bombay government, says Grant Duff, had desperately sent a handful of men against the Maratha empire, and had committed the conduct of such an enterprise to men totally unfit for such a charge, the truth being that the Marathas were at that time, and nearly up to the end of the century, at least a match for the English

After this second discomfiture in the field, and after the miscarriage of some very diplomatic attempts to detach some of the leading chiefs from the Maratha

confederacy—attempts in which he was outwitted by those adepts in subtle statecraft—Hastings found himself caught in the meshes of protracted war with a brave, active, shifty, and indefatigable enemy, who knew well how to stir up trouble for him in various parts of India. Hyder Ali of Mysore, who had been for some years husbanding his resources and biding his time in the peninsula, now began to disclose ominous symptoms of the vindictive spirit that had been fermenting in his implacable mind ever since the English had abandoned him to the Marathas in 1769 When the Calcutta government determined to seize the French settlements, orders had been sent to Madras that Mahé, which belonged to France, should be occupied without delay; because this port, in the extreme south-west of the Indian peninsula, might become an important channel of communication between the French and Mysore. It is conceivable that this may have been precisely the reason why Hyder Ali preferred that the place should be left under his protection, at any rate he desired the Madras authorities not to meddle with it, adding that since Mahe was within his jurisdiction and the inhabitants were his subjects, he might find it necessary to defend them if they were attacked Nevertheless Mahe was taken by an English detachment in 1779, at a moment when Hyder Ali was engaged in picking off some outlying districts belonging to the Marathas, having naturally availed himself of the quarrel between them and the English to round off his own possessions Such a disregard of his express interdict gave the Mysore ruler serious umbrage, which was not lessened by the imprudent attempt of an English force to march across a part of his territory without his permission.

Throughout all this period—that is, during the last quarter of the eighteenth century—the balance of power in India rested upon a kind of triangular equipoise between the English, the Marathas, and Mysore. If two of these powers quarrelled, the third became predominant for the time; if two of them united, the third was in jeopardy. This is what had happened in 1778, when the alarm of war with France drove the Anglo-Indian Government into precipitate measures that embroiled us first with the Marathas and secondly with Mysore, and consequently brought down upon us the combined hostility of both By the summer of 1780 the fortunes of the English in India had fallen to their lowest watermark At Calcutta the resources of Bengal were drained by the cost of distant and protracted war, and cramped, as Hastings said, by internal imbecility; for the Governor-General was still contending against perverse and obstructive colleagues, one of whom, Francis, he at last quieted by a pistol shot[1] At Bombay the funds were so completely exhausted that the Council reported, as their best reason for keeping the troops on active service abroad, their inability to pay them at home. In the south Hyder Ali had made common cause with the Marathas, had drawn the Nizam of Hyderabad into the triple alliance against the English, had obtained promises of French co-operation on the sea-coast, and in July (1780) had descended from the hills upon the plains of the Carnatic with an army of 80,000 men. All premonitory signs of coming danger had been treated at Madras with inattention and contempt Sir Thomas Rumbold, a corrupt and incapable governor, departing homeward in the spring, had recorded in a farewell

[1] Duel between Hastings and Francis at Calcutta, August 17, 1780. Francis was severely wounded, but recovered.

minute his satisfaction at leaving the southern Presidency in perfect tranquillity, yet a few months later Hyder Ali, whose preparations had long been notorious, burst upon the low country like a thunderstorm, and his cavalry ravaged the Carnatic up to the suburbs of Madras[1] The English troops sent to oppose him were surrounded and almost annihilated, the treasury was empty, and there were no supplies in the town, which might easily have been taken if Hyder Ali had resolutely assailed it in force

Hastings lost no time in despatching from Calcutta money and reinforcements under Sir Eyre Coote, who defeated Hyder Ali in the battle of Porto Novo[2], and managed to drive him off from the vicinity of the Presidency town, but the irruption had dislocated all the Governor-General's plans He had now both Mysore and the Marathas simultaneously on his hands His finances were exhausted, his military strength over strained, his attempts to create disunion among the Maratha chiefs had been frustrated, he had to fight one of them, Sindia, in the north-west near Gwalior, another, the Peshwa, near Bombay, and his offers of peace on terms very favourable to the Marathas were ill received The utmost military exertions hardly kept the Marathas in check on the western coast, while at Madras the army which was confronting Hyder Ali was in the greatest straits for provisions, and the Presidency treasure chest was empty Sindia, who was fast becoming the most powerful chief of the Maratha federation, had by this time extended his conquests from central India northward towards Agra and Delhi, but although

[1] Burke's description of this irruption stands as a model of splendid rhetoric (Speech on the Nawáb of Arcot's debts)

[2] July, 1781

this forward movement threatened the flank of Bengal, yet it also brought him within striking distance from our strongest position. After several sharp skirmishes with the English troops, and the loss of the fortress of Gwalior taken by escalade (a brilliant and daring exploit of Captain Popham, one of the forgotten Anglo-Indian heroes[1]), Sindia discovered that his interest lay in coming to an understanding. It was arranged that he should be allowed to prosecute his designs upon the few districts round Delhi still retained by the Moghul emperor, on condition of his mediating between the English and the Maratha government. In this manner, after considerable sacrifices, Hastings at last succeeded in terminating, by a treaty made with the Marathas in May 1782, a war that was neither honourable to the English name nor advantageous to their interests, and out of which arose those exigencies which drove him into the transactions that formed the main grounds of his subsequent impeachment. In 1780 the vast expense for the subsistence and defence of both Madras and Bombay had, as he wrote, reduced him to the most mortifying financial extremities; the two Presidencies depended almost entirely on Bengal for money, and in 1781 the treasury had been drained although every kind of expedient for raising funds had been tried. It was under the pressure of these embarrassments that he demanded a heavy subsidy from the Rája of Benares, which aroused a famous insurrection. When the Raja evaded payment of the subsidy, Hastings went up in person to Benares,

[1] 'Better officers cannot be brought to the head of men than these soldiers who had sought their bread where other gentlemen would not come.' Thus wrote Lord Dartmouth, governor of Tangier in 1684, regarding his English garrison; and his words might well have been used by Hastings and his successors in the eighteenth century with regard to the officers who led for England in India.

imposed a still heavier fine upon him, and placed him under arrest. The result was an outbreak which for the moment placed the Governor-General in some jeopardy; but it was vigorously suppressed without any permanent damage to the political situation. Under the same stress of financial hunger caused by an empty military chest, Hastings subjected the Oudh Begums and their eunuchs to coercion for the purpose of compelling the payment of money which the Begums had no right to withhold, although it is more than questionable whether the Governor-General should have used such means to obtain it The particulars of these two transactions have been so repeatedly and recently given, that an allusion to them seems here sufficient

The diffusion and versatility of the Maratha armies had made them very troublesome enemies, and from their headquarters at Poona, above the passes leading down to the western coast, they overhung and could always menace Bombay But their coalition was weakened for consistent action by mutual distrust among the chiefs, who were now supplanting the Peshwa's authority in the Maratha empire, as the Peshwa had previously wrested the sovereignty from the heirs of Sivaji, whereas Hyder Ali's forces obeyed the will of one ruler—strongly entrenched with an effective army in the angle of the Indian peninsula, commanding access to the plains round Madras and to the sea-coast on both sides—whose position, ability, and warlike energy all rendered him a most formidable antagonist in any single campaign Hyder Ali had long perceived that the weakness of India and the strength of England lay in the defenceless condition of the Indian seaboard. He had himself made strenuous exertions to organize a naval armament, and in his present war against the

English he was relying upon the arrival of a French squadron which was known to be fitting out at Bourbon Island with the design of breaking the communications between England and India.

When, in 1781, this squadron appeared on the Coromandel coast, Hyder Ali was employing himself in reducing the scattered posts of the English in the Carnatic, which were wholly at his mercy, and if the French could have co-operated he would have taken the important town of Cuddalore, which, indeed, surrendered in 1782 to his son Tippu. But the French admiral sailed back to Bourbon, Hyder Ali was pressed by Sir Eyre Coote, and at last brought to bay at Porto Novo, where he was crippled by a heavy defeat which restored the open country to the English. Thus it came to pass that when Suffren, than whom France has never had a better admiral, returned to the coast in 1782 with a much larger fleet, he was met by a strong though unequal force of English ships under Sir Edward Hughes, and he found Hyder comparatively disabled. All the possessions of the French and the Dutch had been occupied by the English, so that Suffren had no base of supplies or repair upon the Indian seaboard[1]. He succeeded in landing 2000 French troops, which were soon joined by a large contingent from Hyder Ali; when a large force, including 400 Frenchmen, under Tippu, Hyder Ali's son, surprised Colonel Braithwaite's detachment, and almost destroyed it after

[1] Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power in History*, p. 426. The description given by Captain Mahan (of the American navy) of the sea-battles between Hughes and Suffren is of extraordinary interest to Englishmen, particularly because the author, though by no means a partisan of England, is stirred and warmed into reluctant admiration of the stubborn tenacity with which the English captains fought their ships.

a stubborn and desperate resistance Meanwhile five obstinately contested naval engagements took place in the Bay of Bengal between Suffren and Hughes. Suffren, an admirable naval tactician, might have beaten the English squadron if he had not been ill supported by his captains On the other side, Hughes and all his men fought their ships with stubborn fierceness, until the superior seamanship and unconquerable endurance of the English sailors so far prevailed that the French fleet was prevented from affording any material assistance to the army on land Early in 1783 Bussy arrived from France with a large reinforcement of French infantry But the death of Hyder Ali in December 1782 had just relieved the English from their inveterate foe, and although his son and successor Tippu Sahib, acting with the French troops, reduced the English army before Cuddalore to a very awkward predicament, yet no effective blow had been struck when in July 1783 the news of peace between England and France arrived Whereupon Suffren sailed for Europe, and Tippu of Mysore, finding himself alone, very reluctantly came to terms somewhat later Thus ended a war of seven years, during which the English power in India underwent some perilous vicissitudes, but the ring of enemies by which Hastings had been encompassed was at last broken, and in the spring of 1785, when he resigned the Governor-Generalship, the English were at peace with all the native powers of India

It will be observed that throughout the eighteenth century the main alternations of peace and war in India keep time with the successive ruptures and renewals of amity between France and England So long as the French were our rivals in the country, the two Com-

panies necessarily took the word of command, for peace or war, from their home governments. After this rivalry had ceased the French kept their coast settlements; but their navy could always threaten our Indian seaboard, and the safety of all our communications with India depended entirely upon the result of the maritime wars between the two nations The Anglo-Indian governments were therefore so keenly sensitive to any apprehension of war with France that the mere rumour of a French descent on the coast aroused them to warlike activity A native ruler who might be detected in correspondence with the Mauritius was sure to be treated as a dangerous enemy, to be attacked and disabled with all possible speed The consequence has been that each repeated demonstration of France against the English dominion in India has accelerated instead of retarding its expansion, excepting only the war that ended in 1783 with the Peace of Versailles. During the greater part of that stormy period the English were too heavily overmatched, too closely pressed in all parts of the world, to do more than hold their ground in India In 1781 England, without an ally, and with great odds against her, was confronted by all the great naval powers of Europe, France, Spain, and Holland and by the North American colonies. In Asia she was locked in a fierce struggle with the two most warlike and skilful Indian powers, both of whom were dealing with the French who on their side had brought into play against England in India the same strategy that was proving eminently successful against her in America We lost our American colonies not through the resistance on land, which might and would have been worn down, but through the pressure of our naval enemies upon our communications across the

Atlantic. This was the weapon used against us in the east by Suffren, who had learnt from ourselves the lesson that in regions distant from Europe superiority of sea power meant the control of the issues upon the land[1]. The French made great exertions to stop our sea-roads to India, to drive our fleet off the Indian coasts, and to throw reinforcements into the camps of our Indian opponents, they captured the only good harbour that commands the Indian peninsula, Trincomalee in Ceylon, and in conjunction with Hyder Ali they might have taken Madras, if Suffren could have shaken off the English admiral's indomitable grip. It is no wonder that during such a struggle, and for some time afterwards, our territorial landmarks in India were stationary, since our resources in men and money barely sufficed to preserve Madras and Bombay from destruction. But the centre and heart of the English power lay in Bengal, which the war never reached at all, and which was governed by a man of rare talent and organizing capacity. No Anglo-Indian government of that time could carry on a campaign by war loans, as in Europe; for its public credit, the sphere within which it could borrow, was confined to the Presidency town. The main cost had to be provided out of revenue, or by requiring subsidies from allied native rulers; and it was Bengal that furnished not only the money and the men, but also the chief political direction and military leadership which surmounted the difficulties and repaired the calamities of the English in the western and southern Presidencies. And when at last the Marathas made peace, when Hyder Ali died, and Suffren, with all his courage and genius, could not master the English fleet in the Bay of Bengal, there

[1] Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power in History*, p. 425.

could be no doubt that the war had proved the strength of the English position in India, had tested the firmness of its foundation. Although the tidings of peace reached India in 1783, just in time to release the English army in South India from considerable difficulties, and the French ships still outnumbered the English on the coast, yet Suffren, on receiving the despatches, said, 'God be praised for the peace! for it was clear that in India, though we had the means to impose the law, all would have been lost[1].'

With the termination of this war ended the only period, in the long contest between England and the native powers, during which our position in India was for a time seriously jeoparded. That the English dominion emerged from this prolonged struggle uninjured, though not unshaken, is a result due to the political intrepidity of Warren Hastings. It seems unnecessary to continue here the discussions, which have now lasted more than a century, over the career of this remarkable Englishman. What chiefly concerns us to understand is that Hastings carried the government of India safely through one of the sharpest crises in our national history, when our transmarine possessions were in great peril all over the world, because all the naval powers of Europe were banded against us. When, in the course of the Seven Years War, our successes against the French in India and North America had freed England from her only powerful rival, it might have been supposed that we should remain in comparatively peaceful occupation. But so soon as foreign competition ceased, internal troubles began in both hemispheres; the colonists struck for independence in the West; the native powers combined to dispute our

[1] Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power in History*, p. 464.

predominance in the East, and France, evicted and disappointed, naturally encouraged and aided both movements. In America the insurgents, after an arduous struggle, tore down the British flag, in India the end of a long and exhausting contest found our flag not only flying still, but planted more firmly than ever; nor had either the vindictive hostility of Mysore, or the indefatigable activity of the Marathas, succeeded in wresting an acre of British territory from the grasp of Warren Hastings

Hastings had no aristocratic connexions or parliamentary influence at a time when the great families and the House of Commons held immense power: he was surrounded by enemies in his own Council, and his immediate masters, the East India Company, gave him very fluctuating support Fiercely opposed by his own colleagues, and very ill-obeyed by the subordinate Presidencies, he had to maintain the Company's commercial investments, and at the same time to find money for carrying on distant and impolitic wars in which he had been involved by blunders at Madras or Bombay. These funds he had been expected to provide out of current revenues, after buying and despatching the merchandise on which the Company's home dividends depended, for the resource of raising public loans, so freely used in England, was scarcely available to him. Because his war expenses exceeded the scale of his peace establishment, he was accused of lavish dissipation of the public income He was thus inevitably driven to the financial transactions, at Benares and Lucknow, that were now so bitterly stigmatized as crimes by men who made no allowance for a perilous situation in a distant land, or for the weight of enormous national interests committed to the charge of the one man capable of


INDIA
about
1784
90
100
30
20
10
Lun Mount^s
T H I B E T
Lassa
B H O T A N
Burrampooter
Rungpoor
Sadiya
A S S A M
Chittagong
Mandalay
Ava
Zemee
Mahanaddy R.
Martaban
Chaduba I.
B A Y
O F
B E N G A L
Port Andaman
Andaman Islands
Car Nicobar
Nicobar Islands
Gulf of Siam
CEYLON

John Murray

sustaining them. When the storm had blown over in India, and he had piloted his vessel into calm water, he was sacrificed with little or no hesitation to party exigencies in England: the Ministry would have recalled him; they consented to his impeachment, they left him to be baited by the Opposition and to be ruined by the law's delay, by the incredible procrastination and the obsolete formalities of a seven years' trial before the House of Lords Upon such a career, upon the value of the services rendered by Hastings to his country and the injustice with which he was requited, the English people must by this time have formed a judgment too broadly based to be much affected by any fresh scrutiny of the reckless calumnies flung at him while he stood at bay against false and vindictive accusers like Nuncomar and Francis, or fought at great odds against Hyder Ali and the Maratha league

It may be added, as a curious proof of the reputation acquired by Hastings in Europe, that in 1785, when he was just leaving Bengal, the French ambassador in London seriously proposed to his government a plan of secretly encouraging Hastings to make himself an independent ruler in India by means of his native army and of French support The ambassador, having evidently in his mind the success with which France had abetted the revolt of the American colonists, argued confidently that a man who held in India 'almost a royal position,' who had been recalled with indignity, and was threatened with impeachment, would be found easily accessible to such overtures, and the peremptory refusal of the French minister to entertain his ingenious plot was a bitter disappointment to him [1]

[1] *Dix ans de paix armée*, par le Marquis de Barral Montferrat (1894), pp 51 52

CHAPTER XII

THE INTERVAL BETWEEN HASTINGS AND CORNWALLIS

(1785-1786)

SECTION I *State of India*, 1785

It is an observation of Sir James Mackintosh that in the course of one generation the English lost one empire in the West and gained another in the East, and it may be added that we owe not only the loss but its compensation to the policy of the French Government In the long war that had now ended their navy broke the hold of England on the North American colonies, as repeated blows on a man's arms make him let go his antagonist in a furious struggle. But they had so enfeebled themselves by their exertions to fight us on behalf of American independence that they were left powerless to interfere with us thenceforward in Asia, or to maintain their rivalry at sea. From 1783 begins a kind of pause in our Indian affairs, varied only in India by a preliminary trial of strength with Mysore, and in England by violent party-warfare over Indian questions The French Government still continued, according to the reports of our diplomatists, to watch for an opportunity of interfering again in India; but their foreign policy was now suffering incipient paralysis from their growing internal complications. With France, therefore, we had a truce that

lasted, to our great advantage, in India, for ten years; until in the final decade of the eighteenth century a fresh and furious storm broke over Europe with such violence that it rebounded upon India, and levelled most of the remaining obstacles to the expansion of the English dominion in that country.

If we are to measure the growth of the British power in India by the expansion of its territorial dominion, the interval of twenty years between Clive's acceptance of the Diwâni (1765) and the departure of Warren Hastings from India in 1785, may be reckoned as a stationary period It is true that from Oudh we acquired Benares and Ghazipur on the north-west of Bengal in 1775—although the transfer merely registered our possession of two districts which had long been under our political control—and that we also obtained Bassein and Salsette, small though important points close to Bombay But during the Governor-Generalship of Hastings we had been so far from extending our Indian domain, that our hold upon our actual possessions had been severely strained, our territory had been invaded, our arms had suffered some reverses, and the safety of one Presidency capital, Madras, had been gravely endangered In point of fact the English ascendancy in India at this time had by no means been conclusively established, for although we were proving ourselves the strongest of the powers that were now definitely rising into prominence out of the confusion of the previous half-century yet we were still confronted by jealous rivals, and our dominions were not large in proportion to those of other States.

Two things, nevertheless, had been demonstrated by the struggle that had been sustained by the English nation. It had been proved in the first place that the

united naval forces of Europe could not drive the English from the sea, or wrest from her the command of the great routes across the ocean between Europe and Asia Secondly, it had by this time become clear that so long as their transmarine communications with the mother country could be preserved, and so long as their invaluable possession of Bengal remained undisturbed, the English ran no risk of permanent or vital injury either from the Marathas or from Mysore. The position of these two formidable fighting powers in the centre and south of India did undoubtedly still operate as a check upon the English, and they could have diverted our forces to an extent which might have placed us in some jeopardy, if any hostile State of heavy warlike calibre had become established about this time in upper India This might easily have happened, for the wide and wealthy plains of the north-west had hitherto been always the seat, and the source, of the largest and strongest military rulerships But it so chanced, by the good luck which has always attended us in India, that toward the end of the eighteenth century, when the Marathas and the Mysore dynasty were strong and threatening, beyond our north-western frontier we had little or nothing to fear The ghost of the Moghul empire, sitting crowned among the ruins of its ancient splendour, still reigned over Delhi. And although the imperial authority had lost all substance, the shadow of that great name still so far overspread the surrounding districts as to prevent their absorption under a new dominion.

Yet the political vacuum created by the final disintegration of the Moghul empire, and the withdrawal of the Afghans, was already filling up in the Punjab, by the rapid rise and compact organization of the Sikhs.

Under this new Hindu federation, much more closely knit together by ties of race and common faith than the Marathas, the people became animated by a martial spirit and a fiery enthusiasm such as the Hindus had not hitherto displayed. The history of the Sikhs illustrates a phenomenon well known in Asia, where an insurrectionary movement is always particularly dangerous if it takes a religious complexion, and where fanaticism may endure and accumulate under a spiritual leader until it explodes in the world of politics with the force of dynamite The martyrdom of their first prophet, and their persecution by the later Moghul emperors, had engendered in these hardy peasants a fierce hatred of Islam. They had been repressed and broken by the Afghan armies of Ahmed Shah, who routed them with great slaughter in 1761 But in 1762 they defeated and slew his governor at Sirhind, and in 1764 Ahmed Shah was recalled to his western provinces by a revolt in Kandahar He died in 1773, after which date the grasp of his successors on the Punjab relaxed, and the Sikh confederation became closer and more vigorous They were subdivided into *misls* or military confederacies under different chiefs, who fought among themselves and against the Mahomedans, until by 1785 the Sikhs had mastered the whole country between the Jhelum and the Sutlej rivers in the centre of the Punjab, were threatening the Mahomedan princes about Delhi, and had made pillaging excursions eastward across the Ganges into Rohilcund.

To the English in Bengal this revival of Hindu nationality in upper India was exceedingly serviceable and opportune For, in the first place, their real danger, the only substantial obstacle to their rising ascendancy,

lay always, then as now, in the possibility of some foreign invasion by the army of some rival power led by a chief at the head of the fighting tribes of central Asia. But the Sikhs were making it impossible for any such Asiatic army to penetrate into the heart of the Punjab, without encountering the obstinate resistance of men united to defend their faith and their fatherland, in a spirit very unfamiliar to the quiescence of ordinary Hinduism. The kingdom founded by Ahmed Shah had extended, from its citadel in the Afghan mountains, on the west over Khorasan, and on the east over the upper Punjab. It had thus been built up by wresting one frontier province from Persia and the other from India, and as the Afghan ruler was cordially detested in both these countries, whenever he was engaged by invasion or revolt on one flank the opportunity was sure to be taken by his enemies on the other. Even Ahmed Shah failed to hold such a position without great exertions, and after his death it became quite untenable. Twenty years later Zeman Shah, a very able Afghan king, was obliged to retire from Lahore. This last abortive expedition closed the long series of irruptions by the Mahomedan conquerors, who had for seven hundred years swept down from the north upon the plains of India, and had founded dynasties which were only sustained by constant recruitment from their native countries beyond the mountains. Thenceforward the Sikhs were not only able to hold the line of the Indus river against fresh invaders, they also cut off the channels of supply between central Asia and the Mahomedan powers to the south of the Sutlej, who were moreover kept in constant alarm by this actively aggressive Hindu community on their northern frontier. The effect was to maintain among the fighting powers

in northern India an equilibrium that was of signal advantage to the English by preserving their north-west frontier unmolested during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, a critical period when they were fully occupied with Mysore and the western Marathas The barrier of Oudh set up by Hastings, although it had been sufficiently effective against the predatory Maratha hordes, would have been of little use for withstanding the much heavier metal of attacks from central Asia But the fierce enmity of the Sikhs kept out the foreign Mahomedan, and prevented the resuscitation of any fresh Islamite dynasty upon the ruins of the old empire at Delhi or Lahore By the time that the Sikh power had become consolidated under Ranjit Singh, in the first years of the nineteenth century, the English had met and overcome their southern rivals, and could then turn their forces northward without fear of any serious diversion on their flanks or rear

The position of the Sikhs on both sides of the Sutlej was also useful at this period in setting bounds to the encroachments of the Marathas, who were now again pushing northward under Sindia This ambitious and able chief was endeavouring to carve out for himself an independent principality in the upper provinces. He had attached himself to one of the parties that were contending for the possession of imperial authority at Delhi, and had rewarded himself by marching up with a large army in 1785 to obtain his own nomination as Vicegerent of the empire The emperor's eldest son had applied to the English for assistance, and Hastings had been much tempted, just before he quitted India, by the project of sending an expedition to Delhi for the purpose of setting up the Great Moghul again on his feet, and of making English influence paramount at his

capital But the Company, though alarmed at the notable aggrandizement of the Marathas in this quarter, could not yet venture to oppose Sindia's enterprise, and the project of reviving the moribund empire under European influence—which had passed across the vision of Dupleix, of Bussy, and of Clive—was once more reluctantly abandoned by Hastings as impracticable. Yet it was in fact only premature, for twenty years later the march to Delhi and the expulsion of the Marathas were actually accomplished under Lord Wellesley's orders In the meantime Sindia, who after Hastings' departure occupied both Agra and Delhi, became so confident as to send to the English Government, in his Majesty's name, a requisition for tribute on account of their administration of the imperial province of Bengal.

The year 1786, therefore, when Lord Cornwallis reached India, found the English still confronting the Marathas in the west and north-west, and Tippu Sultan, the Mysore ruler, in the south, but with no other rivals of importance in the political or military field against them

SECTION II *Indian Affairs before Parliament*

We have seen how from the time when the European nations first acquired valuable interests in India, the course of events in India has been gradually drawn more and more within European influences The weaker Asiatic States have felt the attraction of the larger and more active political bodies, wars in the west have kindled wars in the east, and the clash of arms has reverberated from one to the other continent. The outcome of the contest was, as has been said, that England now held undisputed supremacy, as against other European nations, in India Then, as the com-

[illegible] the British nation and its great dependency grew to be closer, as the points of contact multiplied, and the value of her magnificent acquisition became known to England, our clearer recognition of national rights and duties brought Indian affairs within the current of domestic politics. Not only foreign wars, but the struggle of Parliamentary parties at home had lately affected India In 1780 Lord North moved in the House of Commons for an order that the three years' statutory notice of intention to dissolve their Charter should be given to the Company The motion was carried against the strenuous opposition of Fox, who asked the minister whether he was not content with having lost America, and of Burke, who warned the House not to throw away the East after the West in another chase after revenue Nevertheless, by 1783, when the period of notice was expiring, the point of view taken up by these great orators, who were then in office, had materially changed The conclusion of peace in Europe and America (1783) had now given the English, after an interval of ten years, a second opportunity of looking into the condition and management of their distant possessions, the loss of the western colonies had sharpened their solicitude for the new dominion that had been gained in the East. There could now be no doubt that England had acquired a great Indian sovereignty, for although the wars and perpetual contests of the last seven years had for the time imperilled our position in the country, the general result was to prove its stability under severe pressure, and thus to confirm rather than impair our ascendancy. Warren Hastings, in reviewing the state of Bengal at the end of his Governor-Generalship, wrote that the late war had proved to all the leading

States of India 'that their combined strength and politics, assisted by our great enemy the French, have not been able to destroy the solid fabric of the English power in the East, nor even to deprive it of any portion of its territories'

It was this conviction that the Company were now masters in India, that they had grown too powerful for a trading association—so powerful, indeed, as to have become an anomaly under the British constitution and even a danger to it—that gave weight and momentum to Burke's assault upon the whole system In his speech upon Fox's East India Bill, which was to transfer the Company's authority to Parliamentary Commissioners, he enlarges upon the extent of the Company's territory and the immense range of their arbitrary despotism 'With very few, and those inconsiderable, intervals, the British dominion, either in the Company's name or in the names of princes absolutely dependent on the Company, extends from the mountains that separate India from Tartary (the Himalayas) to Cape Comorin, that is, one and twenty degrees of latitude If I were to take the whole aggregate of our possessions there, I should compare it, as the nearest parallel I could find, to the empire of Germany Our immediate possessions I shall compare with the Austrian dominions and they would not suffer in the comparison. . . . Through all that vast extent of country there is not a man who eats a mouthful of rice but by permission of the East India Company [1]' There is great exaggeration in this description, and the German parallel is substantially erroneous, nevertheless it is worth observing that more than a century ago, within twenty-five years after the battle of Plassey, the pre-

[1] Speech on the East India Bill, December, 1783.

dominance of the Company throughout India was treated as a fact only too completely accomplished. Nor can it be doubted that Burke's survey of the situation was in the main correct; the weakness of all the native States had been ascertained, the groundwork of empire had already been firmly constructed And subsequent events rapidly verified the judgment of Hastings that 'nothing but attention, protection, and forbearance,' an equal, vigorous, and fixed administration, and free play for its vast natural resources and advantages, was needed to secure the rise of India, under British ascendancy, to a high and permanent level of national prosperity

For some years the constitution and conduct of the East India Company had been undergoing thorough investigation before Committees of the House of Commons, with the result that the need of many reforms, and the expediency of imposing more control on the management of our Indian possessions, had been agreed upon unanimously The Reports of the Committees were submitted, and Resolutions proposed, in 1782, at a moment when the old political parties were breaking up and reconstituting themselves into new groups under fresh leaders, when the famous Coalition Ministry was in process of formation, and when the bitter contentions between hostile factions were at their height In these Resolutions the whole recent administration of the Company was severely condemned, the Directors were required to recall Warren Hastings, and it was further resolved that the powers given to the Governor-General and Council must be more distinctly ascertained When the Coalition ministry took office Fox introduced a Bill altering the whole of the Company's constitution, which was supported by Burke in a speech loaded with furious

invective against Hastings and the Company, ... whom he charged with the most abominable ... and corruption. Against some of the Company's servants the true record of misdeeds and errors was sufficiently long, but Hastings was a man of the highest character and capacity, an incorruptible administrator who had done his country great and meritorious services Yet his integrity was virulently aspersed, and all his public acts wantonly distorted, in speeches that invoked against him the moral indignation of partisans engaged in the ignoble wrangle over places, pensions, and sinecures, among whom none had been exposed to similar trials of a man's courage or constancy, and only a very few would have resisted similar temptations.

In this manner the Report and Resolutions were used as fuel for the engines of party-warfare to drive the Bill through Parliament against some very solid opposition Nevertheless the essential question before the Commons and the country was not so much whether the Company and their officers were guilty of crimes that were for the most part incredible, as whether the patronage of India should be the prize of politicians, who after furiously denouncing each other's measures and principles had made a very dishonourable coalition to obtain office On this point the king, with a majority of his people was against the ministry, that had been formed under the Duke of Portland by Lord North's association with Fox and Burke It thus came to pass that the pitched battles of the memorable Parliamentary campaigns of 1783-84 were fought upon Indian ground, Fox and Burke were defeated and driven out of office, the East Indian Bill was rejected, the Coalition was upset by George III, and by Pitt, who rose at once to the summit of ...

[illegible] In 1784 Pitt carried through Parliament [illegible] Act which vested full superintendence over all civil, military, and revenue affairs of the Company in six Commissioners appointed by the Crown. The chief government in India was placed in the hands of the Governor-General with three Councillors, whose authority over the minor Presidencies was complete on all matters of diplomacy, of peace and war, and of the application of the revenues, and by a subsequent Act of 1786 the Governor-General was empowered to act on his own responsibility in extraordinary cases, without the concurrence of his Council

This system of double government, by the Company under the control of a minister directly responsible to Parliament, lasted until 1858, when the Crown assumed the sole and direct administration of India, a project that had been under the consideration of the elder Pitt a hundred years earlier The immediate effect of Pitt's Act was a great and manifest improvement in the mechanics of Indian government, removing most of the ill-contrived checks and hindrances which had brought Hastings into collision with his Council and the subordinate governments, abolishing the defects that he had pointed out, and applying the remedies that he had proposed. All preceding Governors had been servants of the East India Company, and Hastings, the first of the Company's Governors-General, had been the scapegoat of an awkward and unmanageable governing apparatus, hampered by divided authority, and distracted by party feuds in Calcutta and in London. The position and powers of the chief executive authority in India were henceforward very differently constituted, and the increased force of the new machinery became very soon visible in the results.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ADMINISTRATION OF LORD CORNWALLIS
(1786-1793)

SECTION I *The new Governor Generalship*

But the essence of the new governing constitution conferred upon British India did not only lie in the vigour which it infused into the executive by placing power and responsibility upon a plain incontestable basis, it also strengthened the Governor-General immensely by bringing him into close political relations with the ministry at home Lord Cornwallis, the first of the new dynasty of Parliamentary Governors-General, went to India with a high reputation as a soldier and a diplomatist, sure of the support of the strongest ministry that had ever governed England, and invested with well-defined supreme authority, military as well as civil, under a full statutory title. He was Governor-General over all three Presidencies, and he was also appointed Commander-in Chief Such a concentration of power in one man, his rank, his reputation, his intimacy with Pitt and Dundas, all combined to sweep away the obstacles that had blocked the path of Hastings, and for the first time to clothe the representative of England in India with the attributes of genuine rulership In the exercise of these ample powers he was materially aided by the political

situation in Europe and Asia The unfortunate and misconducted wars of Lord North's government had ceased; they had been succeeded, in the East and in the West, by a period of peace for England, it was the interval of cloudy stillness before the explosion of the great revolutionary cyclone in Europe, which was not felt in India until 1793 Such a breathing time was well suited for carrying out in India wide internal reforms, for consolidating the British position by a stroke at our foremost and most intractable Indian antagonist in Mysore, and for inaugurating a scheme of peaceful alliances with the other native princes, which lasted with the fair weather, but collapsed as soon as the storm-wave of European commotions reached the shores of India

In the year 1786, therefore, we find the English sovereignty openly established in India under a Governor-General entrusted with plenary authority by the representatives of the English nation The transformation of the chief governorship of a chartered commercial company into a senatorial proconsulship was now virtually accomplished, and with the accession of Cornwallis there sets in a new era of accelerated advance. It was Hastings who first set in order the chaos of Bengal misrule, and who drew the ground-plan of regular systematic procedure in almost all departments of executive government But the administration of Hastings had been constantly interrupted by quarrels at home and wars abroad Henceforward internal organization goes on continuously, laws are passed, abuses are firmly repressed, and the settlement of the land revenue of Bengal is the administrative achievement by which the name of Lord Cornwallis is now chiefly remembered in India In fixing for ever the

land-tax of the districts then included within the jurisdiction of the Presidency, he followed the bent of a statesman familiar only with the property tenures of England, where a Parliament of landlords was just about to make their own land-tax a perpetual charge at a fixed rate of valuation. And although the measure has cut off the Indian treasury from all share in the increase of rents and the immense spread of cultivation—although it has prevented the equitable raising of the land revenue in proportion with the fall in value of the currency in which it is paid—yet it has undoubtedly maintained Bengal as the wealthiest province of the empire From this time forward, also, political insecurity within British territory gradually gives way to a sense of stable and enduring dominion, and to that feeling of confidence in a government which is the mainspring of industry. While the people begin to adjust themselves at home to these novel conditions of western sovereignty, abroad the British frontier is rarely threatened and hardly ever crossed by a serious enemy. The British Government has now taken undisguised rank among the first-class powers of India There is as yet, however, no formal assertion of superiority; the native States still make war and peace with us on equal terms, they receive special missions, negotiate alliances, and with their internal affairs we pretend to no concern.

SECTION II *First war with Tippu of Mysore* (1790–92).

When Lord Cornwallis assumed office, there was peace between the English and the native powers; although the Marathas had joined the Nizám of Hyderabad in an attack on Tippu of Mysore, whose fanatical

[illegible] alienated all his neigh-bours. [illegible] refused to join, but he [illegible] up to a war-footing; and Tippu, who was [illegible] enough to foresee danger from the English, spared no pains on his side to strengthen himself against them. The Mysore ruler, who had witnessed the last appearance of the French, as his allies, on the coast, who still had access to the seaboard and was in touch with the French settlements, had by no means abandoned his father's policy of endeavouring to check the growth of English predominance by calling in the assistance of other European nations. But his ignorance of the real condition of European affairs led him to make plans that were entirely futile, and that only accelerated his own destruction. In 1787 Tippu sent to Constantinople an embassy which, though it effected nothing at all, obtained from the Sultan so ostentatious a reception that it probably encouraged the unfortunate ruler of Mysore in miscalculating his own power and the intrinsic value of such politic courtesies In the same year his ambassadors were civilly welcomed at Paris by Louis XVI, at a moment when the relations between France and England were decidedly strained These most unsubstantial diplomatic amenities seem to have deluded him into a very false reckoning of his situation, while they confirmed the English in their attitude of vigilant suspicion and in their determination to cut off such dangerous communications at the first opportunity.

In such an environment of reciprocal distrust the futility of attempting to arrest by Acts of Parliament the natural current of affairs in India, or to resist the [illegible] pressure of circumstances, was soon demonstrated. It had been declared by Pitt's Act that as the

pursuit of schemes of conquest was repugnant to the wish, to the honour, and the policy of the British nation, the Governor-General must not declare hostilities or enter into any treaty for making war against a native State, or for guaranteeing it against an enemy, except for the defence of our territory or of our allies from imminent attack But Cornwallis had scarcely landed when his protection against Tippu was claimed by the Nizám There being no immediate menace of war, the Governor-General held himself precluded by the Act from according the Nizám a defensive alliance which might have checked Tippu's machinations What he did, however, was to give the Nizám's envoy a written promise that he would furnish the Nizám, under an old treaty, with an auxiliary force whenever he should need it, making, however, the reservation that it must not be employed against powers in alliance with the Company These powers were specifically named, and as Mysore was not among them the engagement tended rather to promote than prevent hostilities, since Tippu not unreasonably treated it as a preliminary to some direct movement against himself

All these jealousies and mutual preparations were evidently making for war between the British and the Mysore Sultan, who soon relieved Lord Cornwallis from all further doubt in regard to the Act's interpretation In defiance of formal warnings he pr[illegible]ed to make an utterly unjustifiable and unsuc[illegible]ack upon the Rája of Travancore a State u[illegible]ish protection Lord Cornwallis thereupon formed a league against him with the Marathas and the Nizam of Hyderabad, and the allied armies marched into the Mysore country. Very little was effected by the first season's operations, and in 1791, when Lord Cornwallis in person took com-

mand, the advance upon Seringapatam failed But in the following year's campaign Tippu was overpowered, was besieged in his capital, and compelled to sign a treaty (1792) which crippled his resources and stripped him of half his territory, including Coorg and the Malabar district along the western sea-coast From that time forward he was constantly seeking ways and means of revenge, and he clung desperately to the vain hope of foreign alliances that might strengthen his hands against the English He negotiated with the Marathas, with Zemán Shah the Afghan king, and with the French, who entertained his overtures and made a show of helping him up to a point just sufficient to annoy and irritate the English The only serious consequence of Tippu's dealings with France was that when in 1793 the French revolution produced a violent rupture between the two nations in Europe, Mysore was soon left exposed to the full force of England's hostility.

SECTION III *Maratha and Mysore complications*

In the meantime the Maratha chief Mahdajee Sindia, on whom the Moghul emperor had been induced to confer the title of Vicegerent of the empire, who had made large conquests in the north, and had defeated his rival, Holkar, in a desperate fight, was becoming all powerful in upper India His political aim was to maintain his own independence of the Maratha confederation without dissolving it And as he was sagacious enough to perceive that the English were fast rising to superiority in India, he had been exceedingly distrustful of any alliance with them for the purpose of aiding them to crush a rival, even though

that rival should be the Mahomedan ruler [illegible]. Now that Tippu (with whom Sindia was corre[illegible]) had been humbled, it was becoming manifest [illegible] Marathas were the only military power, from the [illegible] river to the sea, from which the English had [illegible] opposition to apprehend They were masters of im-mense territory, and their leaders were at the head of numerous well-equipped armies, which easily over-came the weak incoherent resistance of the Rájput clans, and would have certainly routed with small difficulty the mercenary troops of the two principal Mahomedan States, Oudh and Hyderabad. But the natural tendency of the commanders of separate armies to carve independent domains for themselves out of the provinces they had occupied, and to turn their camps into separate capitals, inevitably created great mutual jealousy, and constantly embarrassed the common action of the confederation Mahdajee Sindia, whose independence had been recognized in 1786, had since increased rapidly his possessions and his military armaments, and he was now in occupation of the country round Delhi with a large and well-appointed army. The expediency of placing some check on Sindia's aggrandizement, before it should have brought him into collision with the British, had been pressed upon the Governor-General by his political agents. But in this case, as in others, Pitt's Act, which strictly bound down our government to non-interference unless war should be imminent, had the effect of holding us in a position of enforced immobility that often en-couraged a rash and ambitious prince to push forward up to the point at which hostilities became inevit-able. Sindia's policy was now manifestly aiming [illegible] combinations against the English as against a for[illegible]

[illegible] which threatened the subjugation of all India. But his predominance alarmed the Maratha chiefs quite as much as the British government, so that the Peshwa was in no haste to follow his lead or to fall in with his projects.

In 1794, however, Mahdajee Sindia died suddenly, a man of great ambition, political capacity, and talent for war, who had carried out on a larger scale than any other Indian prince the new system of raising disciplined battalions under European officers, supported by effective artillery. But it had been already seen and said by the more far-sighted leaders among the Marathas themselves that this system, which rendered them irresistible by all other native antagonists, by the loose feudatory militia of Rajputana, and by the raw levies of the Mahomedan princes, was more likely to harm than to help them whenever they should be matched against their only serious opponents. These men saw that it was an attempt to play the game of war by European methods, and to beat the English by their own weapons. The regular troops and the cannon hampered those rapid daring marches and manœuvres of light-armed cavalry—their dashing charges and dexterous retreats—which had for a hundred years won for the Marathas their victories over the unwieldy Moghul armies, and had on various occasions perplexed and discomfited the English commanders. In the days of Dupleix and Clive the employment of disciplined troops was equivalent to the introduction of a new military weapon of great efficacy, known to no one except the French and English, and unexpected superiority of this kind always secures a triumph, at first, to the side that possesses it. But the armament and tactics of civilized nations imply high

proficiency in the art of war, abundant supply of costly material, and a strong reserve of well-trained officers; they cannot be hurriedly adopted by an Asiatic chief whose people are totally unaccustomed to such inventions All military history, up to the latest time, has shown that for a rough uncivilized people, destitute of experience and resources but strong in numbers, by far the best chance of successfully resisting a small well-trained force lies in irregular evasive warfare. The severest reverses suffered by disciplined English troops in America, Asia, and Africa—from Braddock's defeat on the Ohio to the recent disasters in Afghanistan and the Transvaal—have always been in fighting against active irregulars, who used their own arms and methods Moreover, in proportion as the Marathas adopted the armament and tactics of European warfare, they lost the advantage that comes out of unanimity of national, religious, or tribal sentiment, out of the bond of a common country or tradition The new system required professional soldiers, who must be enlisted wherever they could be found, and especially it needed foreign officers In this manner the foreign or alien element grew rapidly, until the later Maratha armies became principally a miscellaneous collection of mercenaries, enlisted from all parts of India, with trained infantry and artillery commanded by adventurers of different races and countries

From this time forward indeed, it is a marked characteristic of our battles with the Marathas, as afterwards with the Sikhs, that although they were always sharply contested and often gained at a heavy cost, yet the victories were decisive, the blows were crushing because they were delivered at close quarters upon compact and organized bodies of troops which,

when they were once dispersed or destroyed, could not be replaced. And since all the Indian States and dynasties with whom we fought depended for their existence on success in war, an overthrow placed them entirely at our mercy For in almost every case their territorial title was derived only from recent occupation, and their possession was cemented by little or no national sympathies, so that, unless the conqueror thought fit to set up again the fallen ruler, the people merely underwent a change of masters The whole attempt of the native powers to imitate the military methods of Europe proved a delusion and a snare It led them to suppose that they could put themselves on an equality with the English by a system that really placed them at a disadvantage, and to maintain, upon a false estimate of their strength, large military establishments under foreign officers, which it soon became the chief object of the English government to disband or destroy Nothing was easier for the English, with their command of money and war material, than to increase their own disciplined army in India up to whatever point might be necessary for maintaining superiority Nothing on the other hand, was more difficult than for an Indian prince to repair his losses of cannon and trained soldiers Nor is it hard to understand how in these conditions of military and political inequality, every successive campaign in India for the last hundred years has resulted in an increase of the English territory In fact the whole country has thus passed gradually under the dominion of the govern-ment which excelled all the other leading into participa- art of disciplined fighting, and whose sta for dominion in any event depend upon the life or by upsetting the ruler or general or upon the issue of of the country.

because its resources were drawn from an
reserve of civilized wealth and energy beyond the

After his campaign against Mysore, the chief object of Lord Cornwallis had been to provide for the peace of South India by inducing the Marathas and the Nizam of Hyderabad to join him in a treaty guaranteeing against Tippu the territories that each of them possessed at the close of the war. To this proposition the Nizam agreed readily, being much afraid of the Marathas, but the Marathas declined it because they meditated plundering the Nizam. The two great Mahomedan States of Oudh and Hyderabad were remarkably weak in proportion to their territory and revenue; they carried little weight in the political balance, and the chief concern of the British government was to prevent their premature dissolution. Oudh had by this time fallen entirely under the British protectorate, a system which while it upholds the native dynasty is necessarily incompatible with the independent sovereignty of the prince, for the military defence of the country is undertaken by the protecting power, and the ruler binds himself by a subsidiary treaty to defray the expenses of an army which he does not command. Moreover, no Asiatic dynasty can endure which does not produce a succession of able men, tried and selected by proof of individual capacity to rule. But the system of protectorates, which maintains hereditary right, and does not permit an incapable heir to be set aside by energetic usurpers, cannot fail to seat on the throne, sooner or later a prince who has no natural right to be there.
always sharp of governing ability was already visible in
cost, yet the v was falling into internal confusion and
crushing becaus Security from internal revolt and
upon compact aned indolence and irresponsibility; this

management of the revenue increased the burden of the subsidy; and the maladministration that was partly the consequence of the protective system became a reason for continuing it. Similar symptoms showed themselves later in Hyderabad, when that State also passed under the British protectorate.

The history of these complicated transactions serves mainly to illustrate the extraordinary and ever-recurring difficulties which have beset the British government in India, where the policy of neutrality and non-interference only ripened the seeds of eventual discord, compelling us at last to step in for the cure of evils that might have been prevented. No other considerable power in the country was interested in the preservation of order, the stronger preyed, as a matter of course, upon the weaker, and there was always the danger, almost the certainty, that any military chief who should succeed in trampling down his rivals would before long turn his accumulated force against British territory. We may remember that the British Islands had never been able to abstain from taking part in any great war, during the eighteenth century, among the neighbouring nations of the European Continent, where England owned no land except Gibraltar. There is little cause, then, for surprise that the English in India, with possessions scattered, isolated, remote from each other, intermixed with foreign territory, and exposed to easy attack on every side except from the sea—in a country where, as Arthur Wellesley said later, no such thing as a frontier really existed—were invariably, though often reluctantly, drawn into participation with the quarrels and scrambling for dominion which in those days were continually upsetting the balance of power and the tranquillity of the country.

SECTION IV *Close of the Cornwallis Administration* (1793)

Thus the acts and results of Lord Cornwallis' administration show how difficult it had become for the English to stand still, or to look on indifferently at the conflicts that broke out all round them in India It had been a general charge in England against the Company's governors that they plunged into unjust or unnecessary wars, and were troubled by an insatiable appetite for their neighbours' provinces But it was understood to be one unquestionable advantage of the régime inaugurated in 1786, that temperance, political self-denial, the renunciation of all ambitious enterprises, and the preservation of peace, would have been secured by placing the conduct of affairs under direct ministerial control No Governor-General ever set out for India under more earnest injunctions to be moderate, and above all things pacific, than Lord Cornwallis, and these general orders were ratified by a specific Act of Parliament, framed with the express purpose of restraining warlike ardour or projects for the extension of dominion Pitt's Act of 1784 was emphatic in this sense, and in 1793 another Act declared that—

'Forasmuch as to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and the policy of this nation it shall not be lawful for the Governor-General in Council to declare war, or to enter into any treaty for making war, or for guaranteeing the possessions of any country princes or states (except where hostilities against the British nation in India have been actually commenced or prepared), without express command and authority from the home government'

Yet Lord Cornwallis, whose moderation and judgment have never been doubted, found himself obliged to prepare for hostilities almost immediately after his

arrival at Calcutta; and he soon discovered that the restraining statutes operated to promote the very evils they were intended to prevent Under their restrictions the English Governor-General was obliged to look on with tied hands at violent aggressions and dangerous combinations among the native States, and was held back from interposing until matters had reached a pitch at which the security of his own territory was actually and unmistakably threatened The Mysore war, and a considerable extension of dominion, followed in spite of all injunctions and honest efforts to the contrary Yet such was the confidence in the good intentions of Cornwallis that when he left India in 1793 there was a general impression in England that he had merely taken the necessary steps for inaugurating a pacific and stationary policy Whereas in fact we were on the threshold of an era of wide-ranging hostilities and immense annexations

Nothing indeed is more remarkable, as illustrating the persistence of the natural forces that propelled the onward movement of our dominion, than the fact that the immediate consequence of bringing India under direct Parliamentary control was to stimulate, not to slacken, the expansion of our territories Mr Spencer Walpole has declared in his History of England that every prominent statesman of the time disliked and forbade further additions to the Company's territories, and we have seen that frequent laws were passed to check the unfortunate propensity for fighting that was supposed to have marred the administration of the Company Nevertheless it is historically certain that a period of unprecedented war and conquest began when the Crown superseded the Company in the supreme direction of Indian affairs The beginning of

our Indian wars on a large scale dates from [illegible] and the period between 1786 and 1805, during [illegible] India was ruled (with a brief interval) by the first [illegible] Parliamentary Governors-General, Cornwallis and Wellesley—by Governors-General, that is, who were appointed by Ministers responsible to Parliament and for party reasons—that period comprises some of our longest wars and largest acquisitions by conquest or cession It stands on record that the greatest development of our dominion (up to the time of Lord Dalhousie) coincides precisely with these two Governor-Generalships The foundations of our Indian empire were marked out in haphazard piece-work fashion by merchants, the corner-stone was laid in Bengal by Clive, and the earlier stages were consolidated by Hastings, but the lofty superstructure has been entirely raised by a distinguished line of Parliamentary proconsuls and generals For the last hundred years every important annexation in India has been made under the sanction and the deliberate orders of the national government in England [1]

The closer connexion of India with England, and the importance of the English stake in the country, had now brought our Asiatic dependency so much more within the current of European politics, that the rising tide of hostilities between France and England swept over it, and swept forward the course of events In 1793 began our long war with revolutionary France, which soon affected the temper of English politics in Asia. A few years afterwards Buonaparte was marching towards military despotism in the spirit of an Asiatic

[1] In the case of the annexation of Sinde in 1843, the East India Company formally condemned the conduct of the Governor-General, Lord Ellenborough, and his proceedings were not confirmed without considerable hesitation by Sir Robert Peel's Cabinet.

[illegible] upsetting thrones and uprooting landmarks, [illegible] national traditions and hereditary rights, carving out new kingdoms by the edge of his sword, and laying out their boundaries as one might divide an estate into convenient farms or properties His delight in this pastime attracted him instinctively towards Asia, where he saw that a genius for interminable war and autocratic administration would find illimitable scope in knocking down the old-fashioned rickety governments, and rebuilding them symmetrically at leisure His inclinations tallied, moreover, with his interests, since he could combine a taste for Asiatic adventure with an ardent desire to strike a blow at the English somewhere on the land, as he could make nothing of them at sea The project of an expedition against British India was constantly in his mind, but his first and last attempt at Asiatic conquest was the abortive occupation of Egypt and the march into Syria in 1798, with the declared object, among others, of 'hunting the English out of all their Eastern possessions and cutting the Isthmus of Suez' The menace only served, as usual, to hasten English annexations in India For on one side it accentuated the alarm and resentment with which the English were watching the intrigues of the French with the Marathas and the Sultan of Mysore, and the recruitment of French officers for the armies of those States On the other side, the rapidly increasing predominance of the English and the overtures of the French misled the native princes into venturing for their self-protection upon the very steps that helped to precipitate their downfall Now that England had completely recognized the immense value of her Asiatic possessions, her traditional jealousy of interference by the only European nation that had repeatedly challenged her ascendancy in India naturally

reached its acutest stage during a desperate war with France.

The last act of Lord Cornwallis before he left India, in 1793, had been to seize all the French settlements; Ceylon was taken from the Dutch in 1796; and the English now treated any symptom of an understanding with France, or even of a leaning in that direction, as a dangerous spark to be at once extinguished. Sir John Shore (Lord Teignmouth), who held the Governor-Generalship *ad interim* until Lord Mornington arrived in 1798, was a very cautious and over-prudent politician. Being averse, on principle, to extending our relations or responsibilities, he refused rather ungenerously to assist the Nizám when the Marathas attacked him, thereby estranging our principal ally and encouraging our principal rivals. When the Nizám, who was very anxious for our alliance, proposed a defensive treaty on the basis of mutual territorial guarantee, the British government drew back, not wishing to defend Hyderabad at the risk of offending the Marathas, who might retaliate by a league with Tippu. The consequences of this half-hearted attitude were serious; for the Marathas invaded the Hyderabad country, dispersed the Nizám's army, and enforced on him an ignominious surrender to very extortionate terms[1]. This triumph brought the Marathas a considerable increase of strength and reputation, while the Nizám was so deeply incensed at our desertion of him that he largely increased his trained battalions, and relied more than ever on the French officers who commanded them, and who fomented his alienation from the English. Yet as soon as the Nizám began to augment and reform his regular troops, under Raymond and other French officers, Sir John Shore at once interposed to prevent him.

[1] At Kurdla (1795).

What the Governor-General feared was a combination against him between Mysore and the Marathas; and what he hoped was that these two jealous and mutually suspicious powers would sooner or later fall to blows against each other. But in fighting times the pacific bystander's attitude rarely suits the interest or dignity of a neighbouring State In the present instance it only stimulated the combative instincts of both our rivals, who soon became more aggressive and more formidable to ourselves. The impolicy of having abandoned the Nizám to the Marathas now began to appear, for the Marathas had gained great augmentation of wealth and predominance, and their audacity increased as their respect for the English diminished Moreover, Tippu of Mysore, who nourished wild hopes of revenge and of recovering his losses in the late war, believed the Nizám's strength to have been so reduced that he might seize all the Hyderabad country if the English could be prevented from opposing him. And for the purpose of counteracting the English power he pursued his futile endeavours to negotiate foreign alliances He pressed the Afghan Amir, Shah Zeman, to invade India, and he received in reply a sympathetic assurance that the Amir would soon come to exterminate all infidels and polytheists In 1797 Shah Zemán did march through the Punjab and occupy Lahore, to the great alarm of the Anglo Indian government, for the whole of north India was stirred by his coming, the Mahomedans were preparing to join his standard, the Oudh ruler was totally incapable of making any effective resistance, and if the Afghan had pushed on to Delhi there would have been an outbreak of anarchy and perilous commotion Such a formidable diversion would undoubtedly have drawn northward every available English regiment for the protection of the Bengal

frontier; but in 1798 Shah Zemán was obliged to return hurriedly to guard his own western provinces from the Persians.

Meanwhile Tippu had sent a secret mission across the Indian Ocean to the Isle of France, with letters for the Directory in Paris, proposing an offensive and defensive alliance with the French Republic for the purposes of destroying the English in India and dividing the country between himself and France The governor of the French islands gave his envoys a public reception and issued a proclamation[1] calling for volunteers to serve under the Mysore flag against the common enemy, England. In 1799 Buonaparte addressed to him a letter, dated Headquarters, Cairo, saying. 'You have been already informed of my arrival on the shores of the Red Sea, with an innumerable and invincible army. full of the desire of releasing you from the iron yoke of the English,'—and asking Tippu to send him an agent But the French were themselves soon cut off in Egypt, and as the rumours of foreign intervention by sea or land died away, the Mysore Sultan, abandoned to the hostility of the English whom he had seriously alarmed, soon underwent the certain fate of Oriental rulers who venture among the quarrels of European nations.

[1] January 30, 1798

CHAPTER XIV

GOVERNOR-GENERALSHIP OF LORD WELLESLEY
(1798–1805)

THE British dominion in India, of which the foundations had been slowly laid out during the eighteenth century, was rapidly built up and materially enlarged in the first five years of the next century. It may be useful, in order that the causes of this sudden expansion may be understood, to begin this chapter with a brief description of the political condition of India at the time. We have seen that toward the end of the eighteenth century the Hindus and Mahomedans were contending for supremacy, and that the Maratha Hindus were everywhere gaining ground. Of the five important rulerships that had been set up by Mahomedans, Bengal and Rohilcund had disappeared. Oudh, Hyderabad, and Mysore were all threatened by the powerful Maratha confederation. Of the Maratha chiefs Sindia had the strongest army; he was master of Agra and Delhi; and the Moghul emperor, landless and powerless, was entirely in his hands. Another chief had fixed his head quarters at Nagpore in Central India, was seizing large tracts of country, and levying revenue indiscriminately. A third, the Gaekwar, was establishing himself by the same methods on the west coast, to the north of Bombay. A fourth, Holkar, had become famous as an able and daring leader of free companies, and was plundering

impartially on all sides. The Peshwa, who was the nominal head of the confederation, was losing all control over these violent and unruly chiefs; and except in the immediate vicinity of their courts or camps, general anarchy prevailed throughout India outside the territories held or protected by the English The country was infested by bands of mercenary soldiery, who lent their services to any one who would pay them, and whose captains seized districts and forts wherever they could lay hold of them A notable specimen of this class, interesting to Englishmen, was George Thomas, an Irishman from Tipperary, who landed at Madras from a ship on which he had been boatswain, and made his way up into the northern provinces, where we find him in 1790 at the head of 10,000 troops—horse, foot, and artillery—fighting for his own hand with extraordinary courage and military skill He carved out for himself a small principality not far from Delhi, but he was finally overpowered by a combination of Sikhs and Marathas, and died on his way home Large groups of peasantry, assembling by clans, held their villages by club law, they defied all regular government and were sometimes too strong even for the Maratha armies The old territorial landmarks were all thrown down, the country was cut up and distributed according to the shifting fortunes of predatory warfare, the principal rulers were new-comers, without stability and with no clearly defined possessions or jurisdiction, and even the larger States never acquired any distinctive territorial designation or boundary lines It would have been impossible to ascertain the precise areas under the effective administration of any ruler at a given time, for they were always disputed and incessantly changing. Most of these States were known only by the names of the chiefs to whom

land revenue was paid, and who maintained the garrisons which enforced payment; nor indeed have the Maratha principalities any other political designation at the present day. There were also large tracts in which Maratha and Mahomedan governments shared the revenue, and it must be remembered that distinctions of race and religion were no indications of political divisions, for Hindus ruled over Mahomedans, and conversely, while in all the mercenary armies they were intermixed.

SECTION I *Mysore* (1799)

Lord Mornington, afterwards Marquis Wellesley, landed at Madras on his way to Calcutta in April 1798, on the same day when the ambassadors of Tippu disembarked at Mangalore on their return from the Isle of France[1], bringing a rather shabby collection of volunteers and an assurance from the French governor that his Republic would soon entertain with pleasure Tippu's offer of alliance and amity The instructions which had followed the Governor-General unquestionably warranted him in treating these dealings with the French as an act of war on the part of Mysore 'As a general principle,' wrote Henry Dundas[2] to him, 'I have no hesitation in stating that we are entitled under the circumstances of the present time to consider the admission of any French force into Tippu's army, be it greater or smaller, as direct hostility to us', and within a few months after reaching Calcutta Lord Mornington declared that the growth of a French party in the councils and armies of the native Indian powers was an alarming evil that demanded extirpation

When, therefore, it became known that Tippu's

[1] Mauritius was so named while it belonged to the French.

[2] President of the Board of Commissioners for Indian affairs.

embassy to the Isle of France had brought back not only the promise of an offensive and defensive alliance with the French, 'for the express purpose of expelling the British nation from India,' but also some French officers and recruits for the Mysore army, the Governor-General concluded that he had just ground of hostility. His warlike ardour was easily heated, and he was deterred from at once attacking Tippu only by finding himself unprepared The finances showed a standing deficit, the Company's credit in the money-market had fallen very low, the Madras army was not fit for taking the field, and Lord Mornington was so far from relying on the co-operation of his allies, the Nizám and the Marathas, that he recognized the impossibility of calling them in. The fruits of the non-interference policy had now shown themselves in the weakness and disaffection of the Nizam, in the ominous preparations of Tippu, and in the spreading power of the Marathas The six years of English neutrality—from 1792 to 1798—had been employed by the two last-mentioned States in augmenting their war-resources and extending their territory at the expense of weaker neighbours The defeat and capitulation of the Nizam at Kurdla had reduced him 'from the condition of a great and leading power in Hindustan to that of a tributary to the Marathas'; the corps of 14,000 men under French officers was the only support of his authority Mornington wrote that these trained battalions at Hyderabad were the main root of the Nizam's disaffection, he believed that if they were brought into the field against Tippu they would almost certainly march over to Tippu's side. At Poona, the Maratha capital, the influence of Doulat Rao Sindia (Mahdajee's successor) was now complete; he also held in sovereignty large tracts in central India

and had extended his territorial annexations north-westward up to Delhi, outflanking Oudh and the English possessions in Bengal. He was, in short, the most considerable prince in central and northern India, where he maintained an ambiguous attitude, overawing both the Peshwa's government and the Nizám, and denouncing the impolicy of Marathas assisting the English to destroy Mysore Also about this time Lord Mornington received a letter from the Afghan king, Zemán Shah, announcing his intention of invading Hindusthan, and demanding aid for the purpose of rescuing the Moghul emperor, Shah Alam, from the hands of the Marathas

In these circumstances the Governor General determined to temporize with Mysore by confining his first communication to a demand for satisfaction, while he employed himself in strengthening the Triple Alliance —as he very diplomatically termed our precarious relations with the courts of Hyderabad and Poona—in restoring his finances, and reinforcing the Madras army His first step was to conclude with the Nizam a treaty for the disbandment of the French battalions at Hyderabad, which was then carried out with great skill and resolution, the Nizam receiving instead a force commanded by English officers, to be stationed permanently in his country At Poona, however, where similar proposals were made, the Maratha government was much more distrustful of the British ascendancy and much less in need of British assistance The Peshwa naturally found very little attraction in the suggestion of an arrangement which, under the name of a subsidiary alliance, manifestly placed the State that furnished the money into military subordination to the State that provided the men.

The Nizám and the Peshwa both consented, nevertheless, to join the league against Mysore; and the Mysore Sultan was required in reasonable terms to disarm and abandon his alliance with the French. As he ignored or evaded these demands, a combined army marched against him early in 1799. After some futile attempts to keep the field against his enemy, Tippoo was driven into Seringàpatam and besieged there until the fortress was taken by assault in May; when the Sultan's death (he was killed in a hand-to-hand medley at one of the gates) brought the short Mahomedan dynasty of Mysore to a violent end Lord Mornington broke up the kingdom by allotting certain shares of territory to the English and their allies, reconstituting the remainder into a State under the old Hindu reigning family whom Hyder Ali had expelled, and by whom Mysore, after a long interval of sequestration, is well and quietly governed at the present day

The success of these military and political exploits was largely due to the presence in this campaign of Colonel Arthur Wellesley, who now made his first appearance among scenes where he was destined to attain the most brilliant reputation as a soldier and a statesman Although he held only subordinate military command, his clear and commanding intellect, his energy and skill in action, were displayed in the advice which he constantly gave to Lord Mornington, in his able reorganization of all the army departments, and in the rapidly decisive operations with which he terminated the war The Governor-General was rewarded by the thanks voted to him in the House of Commons[1], 'for counteracting with equal promptitude and ability the dangerous intrigues and projects of the French, part-

[1] October, 1799.

ticularly by destroying their power and influence in the Dekhan'; whereby, said the Resolution, 'he has established on a basis of permanent security the tranquillity and prosperity of the British Empire in India.' The imperial note here sounded—probably for the first time in a public document—contrasts remarkably with the hesitating, almost apologetic tone in which our position and the growth of our responsibilities had been discussed in Parliament twenty years earlier

It may be truly said that the stars in their courses fought against Tippu—a fierce, fanatic, and ignorant Mahomedan, who was nevertheless sufficiently endowed with some of the sterner qualities required for Asiatic rulership to have made himself a name among the Indian princes of his time But he had no political ability of the higher sort, still less had he any touch of that instinct which has occasionally warned the ablest and strongest Asiatic chiefs to avoid collision with Europeans He was swept away by a flood that was overwhelming far greater States than Mysore, that had taken its rise in a distant part of the world, out of events beyond his comprehension and totally beyond his control, and that was now running full in the channel which carried the English, by a natural determination of converging consequences, to supreme ascendancy in India. He had thrown in his lot with the French just at the moment when they were at bitter irreconcilable enmity with the English, and were actually proclaiming their intention of striking, if possible, at our Eastern possessions He received the plainest warning that the English would wrest the sword out of any hand that showed the slightest intention of drawing it against them in such a quarrel, and he might have reflected that while his friends were far distant, the English,

backed by the native powers whom he had alarmed, were close on his frontier But he knew that submission to the English demands meant subordination to their power, disarmament, the loss of his independence, and reduction to the rank of a prince whose foreign relations and military establishments would be thenceforward regulated strictly by English policy, and his fierce intractable temper drove him into a hopeless struggle

The same situation has since frequently recurred, though not with the same intensity, the same option has been offered to other States and rulers And the present form and constitution of the British Empire in India, with its vast provinces and numerous feudatories, represents historically the gradual incorporation under one dominion of States that have submitted and States that have been forcibly subdued As the old Moghul Empire had been built up by a very similar process of gradual conquest, so when that great edifice fell to pieces it was certain that the fragments would soon gravitate again toward the attraction of some central rulership, whose protection would be sought by all the weaker chiefships, and whose superiority the stronger rivals must inevitably be compelled, by fair means or forcible to acknowledge When the acquisition of Bengal had given the English power a focus and a firm centralization, this assimilating process began steadily with a slow movement against stiff obstacles, but by the end of the century it had acquired great impetus and velocity For the English Viceroys were now supported by the direct strength and resolution of the nation in securing their Indian possessions; and the temper of those stormy times coloured all their proceedings What in Hastings would have been reckoned

an act of rank iniquity was in Lord Mornington (now Marquis Wellesley) no more than an energetic measure of public necessity The views and policy of these two statesmen were essentially identical, but Hastings was striving painfully, with slender resources, on the defensive, while Wellesley, backed by a war ministry at home, boldly assumed the offensive on a magnificent scale of operations

SECTION II *The Subsidiary Treaties*

The dissolution of Mysore set forward the British dominion by two important steps It finally removed an inveterate enemy, whose position had for thirty years endangered our possessions in South India, it also gave us complete command over the sea-coast of the lower peninsula, and thus greatly diminished any risk of molestation by the French It led, moreover, directly to the virtual extinction of that power for the control of which the English and French had fought so sharply in the days of Dupleix and Clive, the Nawabship of the Carnatic From the time when that contest had been decided in favour of the English, the Nawab had descended gradually through the stages of a protected ally and a subordinate ruler, to the situation of a prince with nominal authority, and with a revenue heavily mortgaged for the payment of the subsidy that was the price of his protection by the Company In this unhappy condition he naturally kept up a secret correspondence with the Mysore Sultan, his creditor's enemy, and when Mysore was taken his letters were discovered. Thereupon Lord Wellesley found himself amply justified, upon the double ground of political intrigue and internal misgovernment, in bringing the Carnatic wholly under British administration The system of divided

authority was, he observed, a serious calamity to the country, and for the same incontestable reason he annexed Tanjore and Surat.

The declared object of the Governor-General was now to establish the ascendancy of the English power over all other States in India, by a system of subsidiary treaties, so framed as 'to deprive them of the means of prosecuting any measure or of forming any confederacy hazardous to the security of the British Empire, and to enable us to preserve the tranquillity of India by exercising a general control over the restless spirit of ambition and violence which is characteristic of every Asiatic government[1]' This general control he desired to impose 'through the medium of alliances contracted with those States on the basis of the security and protection of their respective rights' In plain words, Lord Wellesley, to whom restless ambition was in Asiatics a thing intolerable, had already resolved to extend the British Protectorate over all the rulerships with which the English government then had any connexion, by insisting that each ruler should reduce his army, and should rely for external defence and internal security mainly upon the paramount military strength of the British sovereignty

The system of subsidiary treaties is worth some brief explanation, for it has played a very important part in the expansion of our dominion It has been seen that our participation in Indian wars began when the English lent a military contingent to assist some native potentate The next stage came when we took the field on our own account, assisted usually by the levies of some prince who made common cause with us, and whose soldiery were undisciplined, untrustworthy, and very

[1] Wellesley despatches.

clumsily handled. The English commander often found it necessary to look behind as well as before him on the field of battle; his allies showed unseasonable impartiality by holding aloof at critical moments and reappearing to plunder in both camps indiscriminately, giving preference to the defeated side. What was needed was a body of men that could be relied upon for some kind of tactical precision and steadiness under fire, but for this purpose it was of little use even to place sepoys under European officers unless they could be regularly paid and taught to obey one master So the system soon reached the stage when the native ally was required to supply not men but money, and the English undertook to raise, train, and pay a fixed number of troops on receiving a subsidy equivalent to their cost The subsidiary treaties made in India differed, therefore, from those made by England with European States in this respect, that whereas Austria or Russia raised armies on funds provided by England, Oudh or Hyderabad provided funds on which the British government raised armies Large sums had been hitherto spent by the native princes in maintaining ill-managed and insubordinate bodies of troops, and in constant wars against each other, they might economize their revenues, be rid of a mutinous soldiery, and sit much more quietly at home, by entering into contracts with a skilful and solvent administration that would undertake all serious military business for a fixed subsidy.

But as punctuality in money matters has never been a princely quality, this subsidy was apt to be paid very irregularly, so the next stage was to revive the long-standing practice of Asiatic governments, the assignment of lands for the payment of troops There were now in India (excluding the Punjab, with which we

had as yet no dealings) but three States whose size or strength could give the English government any concern One of these, the Maratha federation, was still strong and solvent, but the two Mahomedan States of Oudh and Hyderabad were in no condition to resist the proposals of Lord Wellesley, nor is it likely that either of them could have long maintained itself without British protection The Nizám of Hyderabad had been very liberally treated in the partition of Mysore, and Tippu's destruction had relieved him of an inveterate foe In 1800 he transferred to the British government considerable districts in perpetuity, 'for the regular payment of the expenses of the augmented subsidiary force' The position of the Vizier of Oudh was much more important We have seen that Clive and Hastings maintained this prince for the safety of our north-west frontier, which was still covered by his dominions But the Afghan king, Zeman Shah, was now making his last inroad into the Punjab, and the Maratha chief Sindia was in possession of Delhi while the Oudh Vizier was a weak ruler whose country was in confusion, whose troops were mutinous, and whose finances were disordered by the heavy strain of the English subsidy. He could not collect his land revenue except by compulsion, and when his treasury was empty he could not pay his army, which was becoming clamorous and insubordinate In these circumstances Lord Wellesley required the Vizier to disband his disorderly forces, in order that more British troops might be subsidized for the effective defence of his dominions The Vizier, under pressure of many perplexities, declared that he would abdicate, but afterwards retracted, and the Governor-General, who would willingly have had a free hand in Oudh, received the retractation with 'astonishment,

regret, and indignation.' It must be admitted that Lord Wellesley subordinated the feelings and interests of his ally to paramount considerations of British policy in a manner that showed very little patience, forbearance, or generosity. Throughout all this correspondence he was lecturing the Vizier from the high ground of moral superiority and anxiety to rescue the people of Oudh from the misery of intolerable misrule Undoubtedly these considerations had their just weight with him, yet his preponderating motive was to bring Oudh completely under English influence and control, to accomplish a valuable and productive extension of British territory, and to quarter British troops on the revenues of Oudh. Nevertheless it was really most necessary to set in order the affairs of Oudh, and the result of Lord Wellesley's somewhat dictatorial negotiations was that the Vizier ceded all his frontier provinces, including Rohilcund, to the Company, the revenue of the territory thus transferred being taken as an equivalent to the subsidy payable for troops This arrangement finally superseded the barrier policy of Hastings, which had effectually served its purpose for thirty years Instead of placing Oudh in charge of the districts exposed to attack from the Marathas and invaders from the north west, Lord Wellesley now obtained by cession the whole belt of exterior territory, and Oudh was thenceforward enveloped by the English dominion except on its northern border, where it was bounded by the hill-State of Nipal This most important augmentation of territory transferred to the British government some of the richest and most populous districts in the heart of India, lying along the Ganges and its tributaries above Benares up to the foot of the Himalayan range It consolidated our power on a broader foundation, brought a very

large increase of revenue, and confronted us with the Maratha chief Sindia along the whole line of his possessions in upper India. These very trenchant strokes of policy were severely criticized by the Directors of the East India Company and cordially approved by His Majesty's ministers.

SECTION III *The Marathas* (1802–1805).

The evacuation of Egypt by the French and the Peace of Amiens necessarily dislocated for a time the mainspring of Lord Wellesley's martial activity Hitherto he had been able to describe his policy as purely self-defensive and pacific, to explain that he was compelled to extend the dominion of England by the need of counteracting the design of France, and that he had insisted on reducing the armies of the native princes in order to preserve them against a nation who 'considered all the thrones of the world as the sport and prey of their boundless ambition and insatiable rapine[1]' But Mysore, Hyderabad, and Oudh had now been placed beyond danger of the French contagion, and Lord Wellesley was able to record that 'the only native powers of importance now remaining in India independent of British protection are the confederate Maratha States' It could only be through a perverse contrariety of spirit that, notwithstanding his solemn warnings against the machinations of France, the European power which the Marathas persisted in regarding with uneasiness was England Their restless character, the advantages presented by their local position to any future intrigues with France, and the number of French officers in the service of

[1] See his letter (1799) to Tippu Sultan, who may possibly have thought that this description did not apply exclusively to the French.

to his ignorance from western affairs (European affairs)

Sindia, convinced the Governor-General that it was a matter of indispensable precaution to acquire an ascendancy in the councils of the Maratha Empire, and to frame a system of political connexion that should preserve a powerful barrier against them. This barrier had now been erected by the subsidiary treaties with the Mahomedan States, and it may be observed that the hard bargains imposed by Lord Wellesley on the Nizám and the Vizier of Oudh can be very fairly justified if they are judged exclusively by the standard of political expediency These princes did indeed pay high prices for British protection, but they could not have stood without it. They would have been gradually devoured by the Marathas, whose power would have been seriously augmented by the acquisition of large additions to their revenues and their territory. As the three leading Maratha chiefs—Sindia Holkar, and the Rája of Nágpore—were contending among themselves in arms for supremacy, the time was opportune for interposing with an offer of protection to the nominal chief of their confederacy at Poona, where the government was threatened by three predatory armies, subsisting at large on the country If the chiefs of these armies combined to upset the Peshwa they might seize command of the whole Maratha Empire, and, what was still more important, their next step would probably be a combination against the English

'To fix the peace of India on foundations of the utmost stability, and to preclude the intrusion of the French, it is necessary only that the British government should draw the Maratha power under its protection' In these words Lord Wellesley defined the whole situation in 1803; and on this far reaching policy he set about dealing with the Maratha princes, as he had dealt successfully

with the Mahomedan rulers The Peshwa, Báji Rao, had hitherto evaded all overtures from the English for a subsidiary treaty; but there was bitter feud between him and Holkar, whose brother he had cruelly executed, and who was now marching upon his capital. When Sindia came to the Peshwa's assistance, there was a great battle on the outskirts of Poona, in which Holkar was nearly defeated, until he charged the enemy at the head of his cavalry with such desperate energy that the allied army was driven off the field with the loss of all their guns and baggage [1] The Peshwa fled to a fortress, whence he despatched a messenger to solicit help from the English, and soon afterward he took refuge in Bassein, close to Bombay, where he signed a treaty of general defensive alliance with the British government, under which he ceded districts yielding a revenue equivalent to the cost of a strong subsidiary force, to be permanently stationed within his territory, and all the Peshwa's foreign relations were to be subordinated to the policy of England

The treaty of Bassein [2] accomplished another leading object of Lord Wellesley's policy, for by admitting the British government to mediate in all the exhorbitant claims that the Marathas were pressing against the Nizám, it placed the Hyderabad State definitely under the protection of the English, to whom in

[1] The British Residency at Poona was almost on the field of battle; and next day Holkar asked the Resident to call on him, an invitation which, as he reported, he 'did not think it prudent to decline.' He found the victorious chief in a small tent, ankle-deep in mud, wounded by a spear, also by a sabre cut on his head that he had received in one of his charges He was polite and frank in his conversation, spoke lightly of his wounds, and talked in the most friendly manner of the British government.

[2] December, 1802

future all such demands were to be referred. No time was lost in acting upon this important engagement The Peshwa was escorted back to Poona by a British force under General Arthur Wellesley, and it was signified to the contending Maratha chiefs that their central government had been taken under British protection. This masterful proceeding alarmed even Lord Castlereagh, who wrote to the Governor-General some remonstrances against a step which 'tended to involve us in the endless and complicated distractions of the turbulent Maratha Empire' He replied that the influence of the French in the Maratha camp was still to be feared, an argument that prevailed easily over an English ministry who were just bracing up the national strength, after a short breathing time, for a second and still closer wrestle with Buonaparte

Lord Wellesley's political system was now reaching its climax His subsidiary troops were encamped at the capitals of the four great Indian powers which had been our political rivals, at Mysore, Hyderabad, Lucknow, and Poona, all disputes among these States were to be submitted to his arbitration, and the interference of all other European nations was to be rigidly excluded Upon these pillars he was building up firmly the inevitable preponderance of a steady, civilized, orderly administration over the jarring, incoherent rulerships by which it was surrounded But it was not to be expected that the Treaty of Bassein would be otherwise than unpalatable to the Maratha chiefs, who saw that a blow had been struck at the root of their confederacy, and that the establishment of paramount British influence at Poona not only checkmated their movement against the capital, but was a sure step toward the subversion of their own independence. The maintenance of the head

of the Maratha empire in a condition of dependent subjection to the British government would naturally, in the course of time, tend to reduce the other Maratha powers into a similar condition of subordination, which was precisely what they feared and were determined to resist. They withheld acknowledgment of the treaty, questioned the Peshwa's right to conclude it without their consent, suspended their internal feuds, and seemed inclined to combine against the common danger.

Lord Wellesley had announced to Sindia that a defensive alliance had been concluded between the British government and the Peshwa for the purpose of restoring the Peshwa's legitimate authority, and Sindia had been invited to join it He replied that he had been honoured by the Governor-General's agreeable letter, and was marching upon Poona with precisely the same object; but that the proposition of alliance required mature consideration. It was soon discovered that Sindia was corresponding with the other Maratha chiefs with the intention of forming a combination against the British He secured the adherence of the Maratha chief of Nagpore (commonly called the Raja of Berar), who had great influence over all the other leaders, but Holkar, although he agreed to a truce with Sindia, refused to join, and the Gaekwar of Baroda kept apart Sindia, however, effected his junction with the Nágpore Raja, when both chiefs evaded the demand of the British envoy for a direct explanation of their intentions, and marched up to the frontier of Hyderabad It was in the interest of the Marathas to gain time, for they hoped that Holkar might be persuaded to enter the league, it was for the same reason important to the British that the two chiefs should be forced to decide speedily between peace or war. The Governor-General was now again in his

element, for in Europe a renewal of the French war was evidently at hand; the English ministers had warned him that a rupture of the peace of Amiens was imminent, and that a French squadron was preparing at Brest for the East Indies; they had authorized him to retain possession of the French settlements that were to be restored under the Amiens Treaty, and they had desired him to keep his forces on a war-footing At the same time, some observations, which appeared to the Governor-General particularly inopportune, were conveyed to him upon the increase of his military expenditure and the diversion of funds on which the Company relied for their trade

Lord Wellesley, who had offered to resign, requested the ministers to 'consider the alarm and anger of the Court of Directors on this latter subject with the indulgence which true wisdom extends to the infirmities of prejudice, ignorance, and passion', while he prepared with alacrity to attack the Maratha confederates simultaneously in various quarters, and to open the impending war on the largest possible scale The rupture with France intensified, as usual, his sense of the emergent necessity of bringing all the military powers of India under our supreme control. For although there was little real danger, as Arthur Wellesley pointed out, of the French being able to join forces with the Marathas —since their troops, even if they could land, would be destitute of equipments, and would be cut off from their base of supply - yet undoubtedly a great European war must always add risks to our position in India Lord Wellesley also saw clearly enough that the security of the dominion that he was establishing on land depended essentially upon our maintaining a commanding superiority at sea. He urged upon the ministry at

home that so long as the Cape of Good Hope and the Mauritius were in French hands (for the Dutch were entirely under French influence) the coasts of India could be molested, or our enemies inland might be encouraged by expectations of aid from France He spared, in short, no pains or preparations that might enable him so to use this opportunity of renewed hostilities in Asia and Europe as to accomplish 'the complete consolidation of the British Empire in India and the future tranquillity of Hindusthan' Whatever may be thought of the methods occasionally used by Lord Wellesley to compass these ends, it is impossible to withhold our admiration from a conception so large, from so clear and far-ranging a survey of the political horizon

With these views and intentions the Governor-General issued his orders to General Wellesley, who was facing Sindia in western India, and to General Lake, who was moving upon Sindia's possessions in the north-west The main objective was to be either the entire reduction of Sindia's power, or a peace that should transfer to the British government so much of his territory as should be sufficient to isolate him in central India, to cut him off from the western sea-coast, to expel him from Delhi (where he was still Vicegerent of the Empire), and to throw him back into central India by interposing a barrier between his provinces in that region and in the north country. At Delhi Monsieur Perron, one of Sindia's ablest French officers, commanded a large body of regular troops, with which he held the fortress, kept the Emperor Shah Álam in custody, and exercised authority in his name. This formidable standing army, which was well officered by Frenchmen, it was one of Lord Wellesley's principal

objects to disband; and his anxiety to cross swords with Sindia was intensified by his knowledge of constant intrigues and correspondence between the Marathas and the agents of France.

The British power was wielded by an active and energetic Governor-General, virtually autocratic, drawing his revenues from fertile and well-administered provinces, and supported by compact, well-disciplined armies under two very able commanders, Wellesley and Lake. The Maratha forces were more numerous, and included large bodies of troops trained under French and even English officers, with a strong and very serviceable artillery, but the chiefs of the Confederation were profoundly jealous and suspicious of each other, they kept no faith either with allies or with adversaries. For the previous fifty years, at least, they had maintained and increased their rulerships by marauding expeditions and the seizure of lands, they acknowledged no public law, they had no territorial limits, their camps were their capitals The result of a contest for ascendency in India between two such antagonists was not long doubtful. Under the leadership of the two generals who led the English armies, and who were also invested with full diplomatic authority, the war which now began was brilliantly successful, and its objects were completely fulfilled In July 1803 General Wellesley signified to Sindia and the Nagpore Rája that they must withdraw their army from its station upon the Nizám's frontier, or abide his attack They replied by desiring him first to retire, but as this would have exposed the territory which their movements were threatening, the English army advanced, and war was formally declared. The scene of the campaign that followed was in that part of central India where the northern frontiers of the

Hyderabad State adjoined the possessions of the two Maratha chiefs At Assaye, where the collision took place, Sindia's troops fought well and fiercely; the veteran battalions of De Boigne made a resolute stand; the artillery inflicted heavy loss on the English infantry, and died stubbornly fighting at their guns; but Wellesley's victory was decisive Marching onward into Berar, he inflicted a severe defeat upon the troops of the Nagpore Rája at Argaon, he then took by storm the hill fort of Gawilghur, and before the year's end peace had been concluded with both the Maratha belligerents on terms dictated by the British commander

General Lake's successes in the north-west were of equal importance He took Aligarh by assault, dispersed Sindia's force before Delhi, occupied the town, and assumed charge of the Emperor's person Agra was besieged and captured, and finally the British force met at Laswaree seventeen battalions of trained infantry with excellent artillery, the last of Sindia's regular army It was a hard-fought battle, Sindia's artillerymen stood to their guns until they were killed by the bayonet, and all his troops behaved so gallantly that the event (Lake wrote) would have been extremely doubtful if they had been still commanded by their French officers, but Perron and the Frenchmen had left the Maratha service Nevertheless their vigorous resistance proved the high military spirit which the soldier of northern India has so often displayed; they held their ground until all their guns were lost, and finally suffered a most honourable defeat [1]

The result of these well-contested and hardly won

[1] Assaye, September, 1803 Argaon and Laswaree, November, 1803.

victories was to shatter the whole military organization upon which Sindia's predominance had been built up, to break down his connexion with the Moghul court in the north, and to destroy his influence at Poona as the most formidable member of the Maratha confederacy At the beginning of the war Sindia's regular brigades had amounted to nearly forty thousand disciplined men, with a very large train of artillery, acting entirely under the control of a French commander, and supported by the revenues of the finest provinces in India[1]. This army had now ceased to exist, and both Sindia and the Nágpore Rája, finding themselves in imminent danger of losing all their possessions, acquiesced reluctantly in the terms that were dictated to them after the destruction of their armies The Treaty of Bassein was formally recognized, they entered into defensive treaties and made large cessions of territory, Sindia gave up to the British all his northern districts lying along both sides of the Jumna river he ceded his seaports and his conquests on the west coast, he made over to them the city of Delhi and the custody of the Moghul Emperor, he dismissed all his French officers, and accepted the establishment, at his cost, of a large British force to be stationed near his frontier. The Rája of Nágpore restored Berar to the Nizám, and surrendered to the British government the province of Cuttack, on the Bay of Bengal, which lay interposed between the upper districts of Madras and the south-western districts of Bengal

But Jeswant Rao Holkar, who had held aloof from the war in the hope of profiting by the discomfiture of Sindia, his rival and enemy, had been living at free quarters with a large Maratha horde in Rájputana, and

[1] Malcolm's *History of India*, vol i. p 364.

had put to death the English officers in his service. As he now showed some intention of taking advantage of Sindia's defenceless condition, he was summoned by Lord Lake to retire within his own country, and on his refusal was attacked by the British troops. Holkar, who had always adhered to the traditional Maratha tactics of rapid cavalry movements, systematic pillaging, and sudden harassing incursions, proved a very active and troublesome enemy. Colonel Monson advanced against him into central India, and Holkar drew him onward by a simulated retreat, until Monson found himself at a long distance from his base, with only two days' supplies, in front of an enemy numerically very superior. Then when he attempted to retire Holkar turned on him suddenly and destroyed nearly the whole of the British force as it struggled back through some difficult country, intersected by rivers, toward Agra. A few months afterward Holkar fought a severe action against the British troops at Deig[1], and his ally, the Bhurtpore Rája, repulsed three attempts to carry by assault the strong fortress of Bhurtpore, so that Lord Lake was obliged to retire with considerable loss. But Lake's flying columns pursued Holkar with indefatigable rapidity, until his bands were surprised and at last dispersed, when he himself took refuge in the Punjab. He returned only to sign a treaty on terms similar to those on which peace had been made with the other belligerents.

SECTION IV. *Review of Lord Wellesley's Policy*

The result of these operations was to establish beyond the possibility of future opposition the political and military superiority of the English throughout India.

[1] November, 1804.

The campaigns of Wellesley and Lake dissolved the last of the trained armies which had been set on foot, in imitation of the European system, during the past twenty years by the native princes of India; and the weapon upon which the Marathas had been relying for resistance in the field was thus broken in their hands. In the place of the numerous battalions, many thousands strong, that had been maintained under foreign officers by the foremost Mahomedan and Maratha States, Lord Wellesley's subsidiary treaties had now substituted several divisions of Anglo-Indian troops, amounting in all to 22,000 men, cantoned within the jurisdictions or on the borders of these very native States, and paid from their revenues The employment of foreign officers, unless by permission, was thenceforward prohibited, while the effect of the treaties was to interdict any hostilities between State and State—since all disputes must be referred to British arbitration—to fix down their rulers within the territorial limits authorized by the supreme Government to prevent their future combination for any purpose injurious to British interests, and to block up finally all avenues of communication between these States and any foreign power

Up to this time the acquisitions of the Maratha chiefs in central India, which had been wrested bit by bit from different owners at various times had been so intermixed with the lands of the Nizám, of the Peshwa, and of the Rájput princes, as to produce an entanglement of territorial and revenue rights that furnished, as it was intended to furnish, ample pretexts for further quarrel and encroachment Lord Wellesley's policy was, in the first place, to rearrange the political map in this part of India so as to circumscribe each Maratha

chiefship within distinct boundaries. His secondary objects were to interrupt the chain of their confederate possessions by interposing the lands of some non-Maratha State, and to raise a barrier between Maratha and British territory in northern India by maintaining under British guarantee the independence of the petty States along our frontier Lastly, he desired so to rearrange the map of southern India as to link up our own important possessions in Madras with the central dominion in Bengal This work of consolidation and connexion was pushed still further by Lord Hastings twelve years later, and was finally consummated by Lord Dalhousie, but Lord Wellesley's settlement laid out the territorial distribution of all India (excepting the Punjab and Sinde) on the general plan which was followed for the next forty years, and which survives in its main outlines to this day By occupying the imperial cities of Agra and Delhi, with the contiguous tracts on both sides of the Jumna, and by annexing the whole country between the Ganges and the Jumna rivers, he carried forward British territory from Bengal north-westward to the mountains, with a frontier resting on the upper course of the Jumna By his acquisition of the Cuttack province he secured the continuity of British territory south-eastward along the sea-coast, joined the two Presidencies of Bengal and Madras, and established sure communication between them Our dominions were thus prolonged in a broad unbroken belt from the Himalayas downward to the Bay of Bengal and the southernmost district of Madras; while the cessions obtained on the west coast went far toward completing our command of the whole Indian littoral.

Above all, when Lord Wellesley expelled the Marathas from Delhi, and assumed charge of the person and family

of the Moghul Emperor, he inaugurated a significant change of policy For at least forty years the imperial sign manual had been at the disposal of any adventurer or usurper who could occupy the capital, overawe the powerless court, and dictate his own investiture with some lofty office or with a grant of the provinces that he had appropriated At an earlier period the European trading companies, English and French, had been careful to obtain title deeds from the Great Moghul. It was known that when Pondicherry was restored to the French at the Peace of Amiens, Buonaparte used the opportunity to send out to the French settlements in India a considerable military staff, whose mission was to communicate with the Emperor of Delhi through the French officers in Sindia's service And it was part of a wild project submitted to Buonaparte in 1803, that an expedition should be sent overland to India with the ostensible mission of rescuing the imperial house from its enemies and oppressors Lord Wellesley was at any rate quite satisfied that he was threatened by 'the aggrandizement of the French power in India to a degree that compelled him to lose no time in placing the person family, and nominal authority of His Majesty Shah Alam under the protection of the British Government' He formally renounced any intention of using the royal prerogative as a pretext for asserting English claims to ascendency over feudatories or to the exercise of rulership With the avowed object of abolishing a titular sovereignty that hardly retained the shadow of its former substance, whose representative had been rescued by our arms from a state of extreme degradation and distress, he relegated Shah Álam to the position of a State pensioner, with royal rank and an ample income assured to him.

The arrangement lasted fifty years, until it was suddenly extinguished in 1857, when the storm raised by the Sepoy Mutiny swept away the last relics of the Moghul throne and dynasty.

The political outcome of Lord Wellesley's Governor-Generalship is well summarized in the final paragraph of the long despatch[1] in which he reported to the Court of Directors, in the lofty language of a triumphant proconsul, the general result of the wars and treaties that he had made for the consolidation of our Eastern empire and the pacification of all India

'A general bond of connexion is now established between the British Government and the principal states of India, on principles which render it the interest of every state to maintain its alliance with the British Government, which preclude the inordinate aggrandizement of any one of those states by an usurpation of the rights and possessions of others, and which secure to every state the unmolested exercise of its separate authority within the limits of its established dominion, under the general protection of the British power'

It is indeed from this period, and from the great augmentations of territory obtained by Lord Wellesley's high-handed and clear-headed policy, that we may date the substantial formation of the three Indian Presidencies. Up to 1792 the Madras Presidency administered in full jurisdiction no more than a few districts on the coast But between 1790 and 1804 the partition of Mysore, the lapse of Tanjore, the cessions from Hyderabad, the transfer of the whole Carnatic to the Company, brought large and fertile tracts within the administrative circle of Madras, and constituted it the headquarters of a large government in south India, which has received no very important subsequent accretions In western India the Bombay Presidency, which had hitherto been

[1] July, 1804

almost entirely confined to the seaboard, and whose principal importance had been derived from its harbour and trading mart, now acquired valuable districts in Guzerat; and the influence of its government rose to undisputed predominance throughout the adjoining native States, especially at the Maratha capitals of Poona and Baroda. In north India the Marathas had lost all power, the important province of Bundelcund, containing a number of minor chiefships, had been brought entirely under British influence and partly under British rule, the ceded and conquered districts obtained from Oudh and from Sindia were settling down under our regular administration The Presidency at Calcutta, which now extended, as has been said, from the Bay of Bengal north-westward to the Himalayas and the Punjab frontier, became henceforward the centre and the chief controlling power of a vast dominion, directly ruling over the richest and most populous region of India, indirectly imposing its presence over every other State or group of chiefships south of the Sutlej river, drawing them all within its orbit, and enveloping them all within the external bounds of its sovereignty The only Indian rulerships completely outside the sphere of this paramount influence were those which occupied the Punjab (where the Sikh power was now drawing to a head), the country along the Indus river, and the mountains of Nepal.

The seven years of Lord Wellesley's Governor-Generalship[1] constitute the most important and critical stage in the building up of our Indian dominion on the foundations that had been laid by Clive and Hastings. He had reached India at a moment when the British

[1] May, 1798–July, 1805.

government was halting dubiously between two political ways, before a horizon that was cloudy and unsettled. On the one hand lay the course that had been prescribed by Parliament, of holding aloof from the quarrels of the native powers, and of maintaining an attitude of defensive isolation within our own borders On the other was the course of going forward to meet dangers and disarm rivals, of striking boldly into the medley before disorder or disaffection could gather strength, and of securing the tranquillity of our own possessions by enforcing peace and submission among our neighbours Lord Cornwallis and Sir John Shore, his predecessors, had followed, so far as was possible, the former course But even before arriving in India, Lord Wellesley had discovered (as he wrote long afterwards to Lord Ellenborough) 'how vain and idle was poor old Cornwallis' reliance on the good faith of Tippu, and on the strength to be derived from treaties with the Marathas or the Nizam' With such preconceived notions he immediately adopted, without hesitation, the latter course, and it must be admitted that his choice was rewarded by triumphant success He crushed in a single brief campaign the Sultan of Mysore; he disarmed and disbanded the formidable *corps d'armée* of fourteen thousand sepoys under French officers that was maintained by the Nizam, he took possession of the Carnatic, annexed half the dominions of the Oudh Vizier, forced all the great military States into subjection or subsidiary alliance, and by completely breaking down the power of the Maratha confederacy he removed the last important obstacle to the accomplishment of our undisputed supremacy.

We may regard with just admiration the high qualities shown by the Governor-General in the prosecution

of this magnificent career, his rapid apprehension of a complicated political situation, and the vigour and address with which he carried out not only military operations and diplomatic strokes, but also the reforms of internal administration, and the organization of government in the ceded or conquered provinces No man was ever a better subject for panegyric, nor is it worth while to scan too closely, at this distance of time, the defects of a great public servant by whose strenuous qualities the nation has very largely profited It is essential, however, to lay stress, for historical purposes, on the peculiar combination of circumstances which gave scope and encouragement to Lord Wellesley's ardent and masterful statesmanship, and which enabled him to treat those who opposed him or criticized him with the supreme contempt that his home correspondence invariably discloses He had left England and reached India in the darkest hour of the fierce struggle between the French and English nations, when Buonaparte's star was in the ascendant over Europe, when he was invading Egypt and meditating Asiatic conquests, and when at home a powerful Tory Ministry was governing by measures that would in these days be denounced as the most arbitrary coercion At such a conjuncture there was little time or inclination to look narrowly into Wellesley's declarations that the intrigues of the French in India and the incapacity or disaffection of the native rulers reduced him to the necessity of dethroning or disarming them, and that for our rule to be secure it must be paramount As a matter of fact, he was applauded and supported in measures ten times more high-handed and dictatorial than those for which Hastings had been impeached a dozen years earlier. During that interval the temper of the English Parlia-

ment had so entirely changed, that he could afford to ride roughshod over all opposition in India, and to regard the pacific directors of the East India Company as a 'pack of narrow-minded old women.'

Lord Wellesley's imperious rhetoric was not only the expression of his own character; it was also a reflection of the prevailing atmosphere. A remarkable change had come over the temper of the English people with regard to Indian politics Before the French revolution the violent accusations of immorality, perfidy, and incapacity which Wellesley laid to the charge of the Indian princes were directed against the English officials. From 1783 onward, and throughout the trial of Warren Hastings, Burke was holding up in his speeches the Governor-General and the East India Company to reprobation, and describing the native rulers as the victims of flagrant violation of public faith The Maratha war of 1782 was, he assured the House of Commons, only part of a general confederacy formed against the English on account of the universal abhorrence of our conduct which prevailed in every Indian State The Vizier of Oudh was an injured prince whose country was impoverished by the Governor-General's extortionate demands Within twenty years the parts had been completely reversed, and it was the Governor-General who denounced the treachery, the ruinous depredations, of the Marathas, the impotent misrule of Oudh and Hyderabad But in 1783 the British nation was just emerging out of a war in which their American colonies had been lost, the people were depressed and sobered by failures, and nothing stirs the conscience of men like misfortune By the commencement of the nineteenth century the whole situation had changed in Europe; and at a time when a day's journey across the sea brought to Englishmen actual experience of violent

invasion and conquests, of treaties trampled down by armies, of rapacious usurpation and unscrupulous plundering of weak States; it was not to be expected that the Maratha or Mahomedan princes, who had been Burke's political clients, would gain a very patient or scrupulous hearing in England, or that the protests of the East India Company against the ambition of their Governor-General would have much influence in the counsels of a nation in arms.

The avowed object of Lord Wellesley had been to enforce peace throughout India, and to provide for the permanent security of the British possessions by imposing upon every native State the authoritative superiority of the British government, binding them down forcibly or through friendly engagements to subordinate relations with a paramount power, and effectively forestalling any future attempts to challenge our exercise of arbitration or control In short, whereas up to his time the British government had usually dealt with all States in India upon a footing of at least nominal political equality, Lord Wellesley revived and proclaimed the imperial principle of political supremacy All his views and measures pointed towards the reconstruction of another empire in India, which he rightly believed to be the natural outcome of our position in the country, and the only guarantee of its lasting consolidation. It must be acknowledged that Wellesley's trenchant operations only accelerated the sure and irresistible consequences of establishing a strong civilized government among the native States that had risen [illegible] adjacent ruins of the Moghul Empire, for by swi[illegible] predatory slow, by fair means or forcible, the Bri[illegible]ave been his [illegible] certain to expand, and the armed [illegible] extend beyond rivals could not fail to be beaten down a rule of political collision with a growing European r

CHAPTER XV

THE STATIONARY PERIOD (1806–1814).

SECTION I *Reaction within India.*

BUT Lord Wellesley's career of military triumphs and magnificent annexations had alarmed the Court of Directors, who protested against the increase of debt and demurred to the increase of dominion. The Governor-General professed utter contempt for their opinion, and wrote to Lord Castlereagh that no additional outrage or insult 'from the most loathsome den of the India House' should accelerate his departure so long as the public safety required his aid. Nevertheless he discovered, after Monson's disaster, that even the Ministers found reason to apprehend that he was going too fast and too far, that Lord Castlereagh was remonstrating, and that the nation at large was startled by his grandiose reports of Indian wars, conquests, and prodigious accessions of territory. Lord Wellesley had spent vast sums of money on his campaigns and annexations, reporting these important acts to the Directors (who were constitutionally his superiors) many months after the whole business had ended His declaration
ported against Holkar was issued in April 1805, and re-
The ship ome by a letter that left Calcutta in August.
French, so tat sailed with it was captured at sea by the
tilities receiveat the first official information of these hos-
of Wellesley's by the Directors was by the publication
last Lord Castlerespatch in the *Moniteur* at Paris. At
agh, President of the India Board,

wrote to him that the Court of Directors was becoming unmanageable, that business could not go on in this fashion, and that Mr. Pitt, Lord Melville, and he himself agreed that the Governor-General's return was desirable. So Lord Wellesley took ship for England in August 1805 leaving to his successor's charge a dominion very different in size and strength from that which had been made over to him by his own predecessor Toward the close of his term of office his measures had become much more moderate In 1805 the return of Lord Cornwallis to India brought about a change of policy which checked and altered the whole movement, for although his second Governor-Generalship was very short he had time to lay down the pacific principles that were acted upon by his successors

When Lord Cornwallis reached Calcutta, he found an empty treasury, an increasing debt, the export trade of the Company arrested by the demand of specie for the military chest, and the British ascendancy openly proclaimed and in process of enforcement by ways and means that evidently involved us in a rapidly expanding circle of fresh political liabilities His own ideas, and the instructions that he had brought out, pointed in a contrary direction He thought that the subsidiary treaties only entangled us in responsibility for defending and laboriously propping up impotent or unruly princes, impairing their independence and retarding the natural development of stronger organizations Nor did our interest seem to him to require that we should undertake the preservation of the smaller chiefships adjacent to our frontiers from absorption by the larger predatory States It seems, on the contrary, to have been his view that our protectorate should not extend beyond the actual limits of our possessions—a rule of political

fortification that has never been practised in India. We have always found it necessary to throw forward a kind of glacis in advance of our administrative border-line, so as to interpose a belt of protected States or tribes between British territory proper and the country of some turbulent or formidable neighbour.

Lord Cornwallis lost no time in declaring his intention of removing the 'unfavourable and dangerous impression' that the British government contemplated establishing its control and authority over every State in India. He died, however, within three months after his arrival[1], before he could do more than indicate this change of policy. But his views—which represented the reaction in England against Lord Wellesley's costly and masterful operations—so far prevailed, that for the next ten years following his decease the experiment of isolation was fairly tried by the British government in India. Sir George Barlow, whom the death of Cornwallis made for a time Governor-General, laid down the principle that a certain extent of dominion, local power, and revenue, would be cheaply sacrificed for tranquillity and security within a contracted circle, and he withdrew from every kind of relation with the native States to which we were not specifically pledged by treaty. It will be found that whenever the Governor-Generalship has been held by an Anglo-Indian official, annexations have been exceedingly rare and the expanding movement has slackened, but Sir George Barlow even took a step backward The subsidiary alliance with Sindia, projected by Lord Wellesley, was abandoned; the minor principalities adjacent to or intermixed with the Maratha possessions were left to their fate, the English proclaimed an intention of living apart from broils of

[1] October 5, 1805.

dissociating themselves from the general concerns of India at large, and of improving their own property without taking part in the quarrels or grievances of their neighbours If, indeed, Sir George Barlow had adopted to their full extent the views that were at this period pressed upon him by the authorities in England, he would have disconnected the British government from the subsidiary treaties which invested us with paramount influence in the affairs of the two great Maratha and Mahomedan States, ruled by the Peshwa at Poona and by the Nizam at Hyderabad. But the result would have been to undo the work of Lord Wellesley—to abdicate the ascendancy that we had attained, and to throw open again the field of central India to the Marathas, who would at once have re-occupied all the ground that we should have abandoned It was, indeed, so manifest to those actually watching the situation in India, that the consequence would be a reversion to political confusion—would discredit our public faith, and encourage our enemies—that the Governor-General insisted on maintaining the treaties, and even found himself obliged, against the logical tenor of his principles, to interpose vigorously in support of British diplomatic authority at Hyderabad In 1807 Sir George Barlow was succeeded in the Governor-Generalship by Lord Minto.

SECTION II *Rumours of Foreign Invasion*

In the meanwhile, although the French had at last been effectively barred out from approaching India by sea, and although every native State accessible to hostile intrigues by the sea coast had been bound over under heavy recognizances to the English alliance, yet the signs and warnings of danger now began to reappear in a different quarter of the stormy political horizon.

The Persian king, who had suffered heavily from a war with Russia in 1804–5, appealed for succour to Napoleon in Europe, and also sent a similar application to Calcutta. From India, where the policy of retrenchment and retractation at that moment prevailed, no encouragement was forthcoming. The French, however, who were just then in the midst of a desperate war with Russia, readily responded to the advances of Persia by sending an embassy for the conclusion of an offensive alliance against the common foe Napoleon, who had just fought with heavy loss the drawn battle of Eylau, eagerly welcomed an opportunity of harassing the Russians in Asia, and also of resuscitating his favourite schemes of Asiatic conquest. His envoy to Teheran was instructed that his chief aim should be to form a triple alliance between France, Turkey, and Persia for the purpose of opening out a road to India. He was also directed to ascertain what co-operation might be expected within the country, particularly from the Marathas, if India could be reached by a French army

Then came, in 1807, the battle of Friedland, when Napoleon used his victory to convert the Russian Emperor from an enemy into an ally of France. The offensive league with Persia was quietly transformed into an offer of mediation between that kingdom and Russia, and Napoleon set about organizing with Alexander I a fresh and much more formidable confederation against the English in India. Russia was already an Asiatic power, with a distinct inclination and momentum eastward It is therefore no wonder that this ominous conjunction of France, at that moment supreme in western Europe, with the only European State that could further her designs upon

India, should have roused and substantiated the alarms of an invasion by land; alarms that have never since ceased to recur periodically, gaining strength in proportion as their fulfilment has become by degrees less manifestly impracticable. The inevitable effect of this chronic disquietude has been, from the beginning, to fix the attention of the Anglo-Indian governments more and more, in the course of the present century, upon the north-west angle of India And the concentration of our whole foreign policy upon that point has undoubtedly accelerated the expansion of our dominion in that direction, because in our anxiety about the only vulnerable side of our land frontier we have naturally pushed forward to secure it No sooner, in fact, had the spectre of French troopships hovering about our sea-coast been finally laid under the waters of Trafalgar, than the apparition of European armies marching from the Caspian to the Oxus began to trouble the prophetic imagination of English statesmen [1]

From the day when the Emperors of France and Russia exchanged pledges of unchangeable personal friendship at Tilsit, Napoleon incessantly pressed upon Alexander his grand scheme of a joint expedition through Turkey and Persia against the English in India, with the object of subverting their dominion and

[1] Lecky mentions (*History of England*, vol v p 265) a remarkable letter written from Berlin in 1786 by Mirabeau, on the possibility of Russian armies some day penetrating through central Asia into India. Mirabeau had heard that the Russians made an unsuccessful attempt in 1783 to seize Astrabad in Persia, with the object of ultimately pushing on to India, and he predicted that some day the Russians might in this manner so threaten the English power in India as to produce a complete change in the system of European politics The prophecy is indeed remarkable, but the rumour was premature All that the Russians had done was to send a small force to the south-eastern shore of the Caspian, for the protection of their commerce in that quarter. See Forster's *Journey* (1798) vol. ii p 201.

destroying the sources of their commercial prosperity. In 1807 the pre-eminence of France on the European Continent had reached its climax. Napoleon had defeated every army that had successively met him in the field; he had dissolved every league that had been made against him; and he had forced every leading State to join in a coalition for the rigid exclusion of English commerce from all their seaports. When, however, it became clear that these roundabout methods of attacking England were futile, and that nothing short of a direct home-thrust would disable his indefatigable enemy, the French Emperor naturally turned his eyes toward the only important English possession whose frontier was not absolutely inaccessible to invasion from Europe by land His imagination was fired by the recollection that Asia had more than once been traversed by conquering armies That Napoleon should have seriously contemplated marching across Europe and half Asia to invade the territory of an island within twenty miles of the French coast—that he should have thought it on the whole less impracticable to send a force from the Danube or Constantinople to Delhi than to transport his troops from Calais to Dover—is certainly a remarkable illustration of the impregnability of effective naval defence But his proposals obtained very half-hearted encouragement from the Russians, who had some useful acquaintance with the difficulties of Asiatic campaigning, and a wholesome distrust of the associate in whose company they were invited to set out They were by no means eager to embark on distant eastern adventures, or to lock up their troops in the heart of Asia, upon the advice and for the advantage of the restless and powerful autocrat whose armies still hovered about their western frontier. They

stipulated for a partition of the Turkish Empire as a preliminary dividend upon the joint-stock enterprise, and as a strategic base for any further advance eastward. To this condition, however, Napoleon refused his assent, alleging reasonably enough that it would be playing into the hands of England, since if the Russians were to take Constantinople the English would at once retaliate by seizing Egypt[1]. An imposing French mission was nevertheless sent to Persia, and the Anglo-Indian governments were much startled by the activity of the French agents at Teheran and other Asiatic courts

SECTION III *Extension of Foreign Relations.*

It is from this period that we must date the embarcation of Anglo-Indian diplomacy upon a much wider sphere of action than heretofore The English ministers soon discovered Napoleon's plan of an Asiatic campaign, and all his secret negotiations were thoroughly known to them They regarded as a grave danger the project of a combined French and Russian expedition toward the frontiers of India, and it was at any rate plain that the Cornwallis policy of neutrality and a defensive attitude could not be sustained when these rumours were abroad. For the purpose of counteracting the French demonstrations, and of throwing up barrier after barrier against the threatened expedition from the Black Sea and the Caspian, the Indian Governor-General, Lord Minto, sent missions to all the rulers of States on and beyond his north-western border—to Ranjit Singh at Lahore, to the Afghan Amir, to Sinde, and to the Shah of Persia, who was just then overawed by the combined preponderance of France and Russia Now

[1] The whole correspondence, recently published, is worth careful study, seeing that diplomatic situations and national *rapprochements* have a certain tendency to recur

that Napoleon had become Alexander's intimate friend and ally, the Persian king knew what to expect from French mediation, so he turned for protection to the English. At Teheran a treaty was settled, after much dispute and various misunderstandings (for the English envoy from Calcutta was superseded by another envoy from London), engaging England to subsidize Persia in the event of unprovoked aggression upon her. From Lahore the mission withdrew when, after some negotiations, it was discovered that Ranjit Singh claimed recognition of his sovereignty over territory south of the Sutlej river. At Peshawar the envoy to Afghanistan (Mountstuart Elphinstone) found the whole country distracted by civil war. The Afghan king, Shah Soojah, was barely holding on to the skirts of his kingdom; the Durání monarchy, attacked on the west by Persia and pushed hard on the east by the Sikhs, was already breaking up again into separate chiefships. Elphinstone's negotiations were cut short by the defeat of Shah Soojah, who fled into exile, to be restored thirty years later by an ill-fated expedition that eventually cost the English an army and the king his life.

But all these schemes for establishing close alliances and barrier treaties with Afghanistan, the Punjab, and Sinde were dropped or postponed as the tide of events began to turn again westward. The Spanish insurrection, and the preparations for invading Russia, soon provided Napoleon with such ample occupation in Europe that he abandoned his schemes of Asiatic adventure. Russia was now England's ally in a grand coalition against France, she made peace with Persia and with Turkey, and our apprehensions of danger from armies marching across Asia disappeared, for the time, when the long war which ended with Napoleon's overthrow,

left us in undisturbed possession of India. The sea-roads were guarded by an irresistible navy; the total collapse of the French Empire, the exhaustion of all the great European States, the manifest decay and immobility that were spreading through central Asia—all these circumstances united to secure us fourteen[1] years of comparative freedom from movements or demonstrations affecting our immunity from molestation by land. The only result of all the missions sent from India was, indirectly, the ratification, in 1809, of a substantial frontier settlement with Ranjit Singh, who renounced, under pressure, his pretensions to sovereignty over certain Sikh chiefships south of the Sutlej From that time forward his friendly relations with the English on his south-eastern frontier, and the civil strife within Afghanistan on the north-west, afforded him the means and opportunity of extending his territory across the Indus, of annexing Kashmir, and of building up the Sikh power with a solidity that kept it standing in alliance with the English for nearly forty years.

On the other hand, the eventual consequences of all this premature diplomatic agitation were by no means unimportant or transitory We have seen how French rivalry accelerated our earlier conquests, and how at a later time the correspondence of native princes with France, or the presence of French officers in the Indian armies, aroused English susceptibility It has been shown how this furnished Lord Wellesley with the necessary leverage for driving onward his policy of bringing into subjection or subordinate alliance every Mahomedan or Maratha State that might cross our

[1] 1812-1826 Russia attacked Persia in 1826, and made a long stride eastward in 1828, which revived our anxieties.

path toward undisputed predominance in the interior of India. In the same manner the intelligence of Napoleon's projects first diverted our attention from the seaboard to our land frontiers, and first launched the British government upon that much larger expanse of Asiatic war and diplomacy in which it has ever since been, with intervals, engaged Up to the end of the last century the field of Anglo-Indian politics had been circumscribed within the limits of India, being confined to our relations with the Indian States over which England was asserting an easy mastery, by the natural and necessary growth of her ascendancy Now for the first time we entered upon that range of diplomatic observation in which all the countries of western Asia, from Kábul to Constantinople, are surveyed as interposing barriers between Europe and our Indian possessions. The independence and integrity of these foreign and comparatively distant States are henceforward essential for the balance of Asiatic powers and for the security of our Indian frontiers Before this epoch the jar and collision of European contests had been felt only in our dealings with the inland powers of India, we struck down or disarmed every native ruler who attempted to communicate with our European enemies But from the beginning of the nineteenth century we have had little or nothing to fear from Indian rivals, and we have gradually taken rank as a first-class Asiatic sovereignty. The vast weight of our Indian interests has ever since weighed decisively in the balance of our relations, not only with all Asia, but with any European State whose views or dispositions might in any degree affect our position in the East We have thus become intimately concerned in the political vicissitudes of every important State on the Asiatic continent The chronic disquietude

which began at this period has been the source of some hazardous military projects and premature diplomatic schemes, of two expeditions into Afghanistan, of a war with Persia, and of a policy that is constantly extending our protectorate far beyond the natural limits of India.

From the opening of the nineteenth century, then, may be dated the establishment of our undisputed ascendancy within India. From the same period also may be reckoned the reappearance of that susceptibility regarding the possible approach of European rivals by land, which led first to negotiations and treaties, and eventually to wars, between England and the foreign States adjoining or approaching her Indian dominion.

SECTION IV. *Internal Consolidation.*

So long as the European conflict lasted, the Anglo-Indian government had continued to survey watchfully all western Asia, and to stand on its guard against any movement by land that might seem to affect or endanger our position. In the meantime, our naval superiority enabled us to sweep all enemies out of the Eastern waters, and to occupy any point from which the coasts or commerce of India might be exposed to molestation. The connexion and constant interaction between political affairs in Europe and in Asia, which has exercised so important an influence on the expansion of our Asiatic dominions, is again illustrated by the events of this period. By 1806 Napoleon's supremacy had been established in European lands (outside Russia), but in 1805 the battle of Trafalgar had given England irresistible command of the seas. This sharp-cut division of land power and sea power—unprecedented,

on so vast a scale, in history—operated materially to strengthen and enlarge the English position in the East. For whenever a European State was annexed to the French Empire or forced into alliance with it, its transmarine possessions were immediately seized by Great Britain. The Cape of Good Hope, that important naval station half-way to India, had been finally occupied in 1806, and in 1810 Lord Minto's expedition ejected the French from Java and the Moluccas—all Dutch Colonies, Abercrombie captured Mauritius and Bourbon, French islands, while of course all the Dutch and French settlements on the Indian coasts fell easily into our power. In this manner Napoleon's success in closing the European continent against England had the remarkable consequence that he was involuntarily building up and fortifying, instead of destroying, the British dominion in Asia Moreover, when the French emperor promulgated in 1807 the Berlin decrees closing all the European ports against British goods, we retaliated by the Orders in Council which prohibited neutrals from trading with these ports, and the effect was to provide England with a temporary monopoly of all sea-borne commerce, especially of the invaluable trade with Asia The sea-routes, the ports of shelter and supply, and the harbours, were all in our hands.

At the beginning of the long peace which followed the termination of the great war in 1815 England had secured undisturbed possession of her enormously valuable conquests in the southern seas--of the Cape, of Ceylon, and Mauritius. All the foreign settlements on the Indian seaboard were disarmed; and of the States within India not one could now measure its strength against our power and resources Six of the chief principalities were now bound to our system by the subsidiary

treaties. In western and central India, Baroda, Poona, and Hyderabad, in south India, Mysore and Travancore, and towards the north-west, Oudh with a large number of minor chieftainships—were all under our suzerainty and protection. Beyond our frontiers were the growing kingdom of Ranjit Singh in the Punjab, and the Gúrkha State of Nepal along the southern slopes of the Himalayas. Only in central India there remained three principalities, surrounded by British territory, that had not yet come formally within the circle of our dominion. They belonged to the three families who still represented the fighting and predatory traditions of the Maratha confederacy, Sindia at Gwalior, Holkar at Indore, and the Bhonsla at Nágpore To these may be added, though the status was different, the ruling house of the Gaekwar at Baroda

From the cessation of the great war that determined in our favour the contest with the native States for ascendancy in India we may also reckon the introduction of orderly administration within our territories, and of a systematic policy in regard to our neighbours, the recognition, in fact, of our imperial duties and obligations. The Mahomedan States of Hyderabad and Oudh were indebted for their survival to our protection; they would have been destroyed, but for our intervention, by fiercer and more vigorous rivals in the general scramble for dominion Nevertheless it must be admitted that at times they had paid heavy salvage to us for their rescue In some of our earlier transactions with them we had used the rough thoroughgoing methods of a stormy and dissolute period, and on emergencies their lands and revenues had been laid under severe contributions to our military expenditure. The time had now come when the British government,

no longer driven to these summary expedients by the struggle for existence, but drawing from its own possessions an ample and secure revenue, could regulate its dealings in civilized fashion by settled treaties, and could begin to adjust all its dealings with native States on the fair and equitable basis of their subordinate relationship.

So also we had now some leisure for looking into the condition of our domestic administration, and bringing into some kind of order the great provinces which had been recently acquired The investigation of land-tenures, the institution of an elementary police, the first serious attempts to check the brigandage prevailing in our districts, the arrangement and supervision of the local courts of justice, took substantial form at the beginning of this century, the roots of that immense system of organized government which has since spread over all India were planted at this season of comparative tranquillity The first five years of the nineteenth century were occupied with continuous wars, with great territorial changes, with the removal of landmarks, and the rearrangement of rulerships But from that time forward the country under British jurisdiction has experienced immunity from foreign invasion or serious violation of its frontier, and even (except in 1857) from internal commotions It may be questioned whether any State in Asia or even in Europe has enjoyed during the same period such complete political tranquillity

CHAPTER XVI

THE GOVERNOR-GENERALSHIP OF LORD HASTINGS (1813-1823)

SECTION I *Condition of Central India*

SOME attempt has already been made to explain the views and circumstances under which, after Lord Wellesley's departure, the British government determined to retire within its own administrative borders, to transact in future its political affairs upon the principle of limited liability, and to maintain, outside its actual obligations, the attitude of a placid spectator, unconcerned with the quarrels or misfortunes of his neighbours It is a policy which from time immemorial a strong European State, placed in the midst of uncivilized rulers or races, has vainly endeavoured to uphold It appears at first to be simple and prudent, to be dictated by enlightened self-interest, and by public morality Unfortunately it has hitherto invariably failed to do more than check or postpone for an interval the really inevitable tendency of an organized power to override, if not to absorb, loose tribal rulerships and ephemeral despotisms, which spring up and survive merely because more durable institutions are wanting and until they are supplied Not only, indeed, is the check temporary, the reaction is apt to produce a rebound, a halt is followed by a great stride forward,

a few steps taken backward look like preparations for a longer leap; so that masterly inactivity is attributed to astute calculation, and we are often unjustly accused in India of allowing the pear to rot that it may drop the easier into our hands. It is usual to lay the blame of this invariable expansion upon those who direct imperial affairs on the frontier or in the outlying provinces, but the true impulse comes quite as often from the metropolis, where the accumulation of capital, or the impulse of national interests—of war or diplomatic complications in Europe—drives forward war and enterprise along the line of least resistance. This onward movement may be temporarily arrested by such physical obstacles as mountains or deserts, but it comes to a standstill only when the way is at last blocked by a rival power of equal calibre, or when the central forces begin to decline. The truth is that in the art of political engineering solid construction depends on the material available and on the proper adaptation of resistance to natural pressure. It is as impossible to lay down a frontier on an untenable line as to throw a dam across a river on bad foundations. The dam is carried away at the next flood; nor will the strictest prudence long maintain a frontier or a system that does not run upon the natural lines of political or territorial permanency.

When, therefore, at the beginning of this century we drew back from what seemed to Lord Cornwallis a network of embarrassing ties and compromising guarantees, we retained, as has been said, certain great States within the sphere of our surveillance; but we left almost all central India, including Rájputana, to take care of itself. All round our own territories we drew a cordon of rigid irresistible order; while outside this ring-fence, in the great interior region that contained the principalities of the Maratha families and of

the ancient Rájput chiefs, we allowed a free hand to Sindia, Holkar and the predatory leaders. Scattered among the Maratha territories were a crowd of tribal chiefships and petty feudatories in various stages of dependence. Beyond the Maratha border, toward the great western desert, lay the Rájput States, too weak and disunited to oppose the exactions and dilapidations of great predatory armies. This group of primitive tribal chiefships, the last surviving relics of mediaeval India, had outlasted the Afghan and the Moghul empires, and had weathered the tumultuous anarchy of the eighteenth century. But they were rent by intestine feuds, and the militia of the Rájput clans was quite incapable of resisting the trained bands of the Marathas or the Afghan mercenaries of Amir Khan. Some of these States were now remonstrating earnestly with the British government for refusing to admit them within its protectorate, which they claimed as a matter of right. 'They said that some power in India had always existed to which peaceable States submitted, and in return obtained its protection against the invasions of upstart chiefs and the armies of lawless banditti; that the British government now occupied the place of that protecting power, and was the natural guardian of weak States which were continually exposed to the cruelties and oppression of robbers and plunderers, owing to the refusal of the British Government to protect them[1].'

Lord Minto, who had gone out to India with the intention of maintaining what was called the defensive policy, changed his views materially before he made over charge of the Governor-Generalship, in 1813, to

[1] Letter from Sir Charles Metcalfe, Resident for Rájputana, June, 1816.

Lord Moira, afterwards Marquis of Hastings. He had found himself compelled to interpose with an armed force for the protection of Holkar's government against a captain of banditti, and to place an army in the field to overawe the freebooter Amir Khan, who was about to overrun the Nágpore country. From 1811 to 1813 the Pindarees increased rapidly in numbers. The origin of these famous bands is to be found in the scouts and foragers who had always formed the loose fringe, so to speak, of every Indian army, receiving no pay, subsisting by pillage, but submitting generally to the orders of the commander of the whole force. As the regular armies of the native States were reduced, and the governments lost strength, these bands detached themselves from all military or civil subordination, and set up as hordes of free lances under their own leaders. By this time they had invaded, plundered, and ransomed the territories of the Nizam and the Peshwa, our allies, and they were now threatening with fire and sword our own rich province of Behar. The principle of non-interference seems to have been defended upon the ground that all these jarring and complicated elements of disorder would gradually settle down and become fused into strong and solidly constituted states. But it soon became manifest that an attempt to confine epidemic disease within fixed areas in the midst of some populous country would be not much more unreasonable than the plan of allowing political disorders to breed and multiply in the centre of India. For in the first place the Maratha chiefs were sullen, discontented, naturally ill-disposed towards the government which had recently overthrown their predominance, and seeking by all means to repair and augment their military forces. Secondly, the enforce-

ment of systematic order all round them, and of restriction within fixed boundaries, was irreconcilable with the conditions that had engendered their power and that were still necessary to its existence, for the Maratha princes could maintain large armies only by levying exactions from their neighbours and by constantly taking the field upon marauding excursions And, thirdly, it was evident that the cessation of irregular warfare and the establishment of a steady protectorate over the greater portion of India must inevitably aggravate the sufferings and intensify the confusion in those parts where the supreme pacifying authority disclaimed jurisdiction, and formally abdicated every right of interference Large bodies of troops were disbanded by the British government and by its allies. But as all this multitude of men who lived by the sword and the free lance found their occupation gone within the pale of orderly government, they poured out of the pacified districts into the kingdoms of misrule like water draining from a cultivated upland into the low-lying marshes

It was indeed impossible that a kind of political Alsatia, full of brigands and roving banditti, could be long tolerated in the midst of a country just settling down into the peaceful and industrious stage Such a situation, nevertheless, followed necessarily upon the introduction, by a sharp turn of policy, of the new principle. The British government could not now stay at home and stand apart without stopping half way in the pacification of India, and leaving one great homogeneous population under two different and entirely incompatible political systems For although the Indian people are broken up into diversities of race and language, they are as a whole not less distinctly marked

off from the rest of Asia by certain [illegible] characteristics than their country is by the [illegible] and the sea. The component parts of this great country hang together, physically and politically; there is no more room for two irreconcilable systems of government than in Persia, China, or Asiatic Turkey. The attitude of insulation might not have been inconsistent in the infancy of the English dominion, when the forces of the native States were better divided and more equally balanced, and when we might have confined our enterprise to the establishment of a great maritime and commercial power on the shores of the Indian and Arabian seas, like the Phœnicians or the Venetians in the Mediterranean. But it has been seen that during the second half of the eighteenth century we penetrated inland, striking in among the local wars and seizing territory in order to protect ourselves and forestall the French Then before the last apprehensions of French rivalry had vanished we had been confronted by the Marathas and the Mysore rulers, whose natural jealousy of our rising power was abetted by the French, and whose well-appointed armies directly threatened our position To meet this danger Lord Wellesley had organized subsidiary forces on a large scale, undertaking on the part of the British government the general defence of all States that submitted to our political influence, and confining within fixed boundaries all those that held aloof Lastly, when Mysore and the Maratha confederacy—the two powers that made head against us—had been the one destroyed, and the other disabled, our own ascendancy had so overshadowed all India that it was too late to descend from the height we had attained, or to stand still abruptly on the road to universal dictatorship. We had now

[illegible] a conquering power, we had assumed a con[illegible] sovereignty; and upon us the duty of providing the police of India had manifestly fallen. When we attempted to disclaim it no one else could undertake the business; and the smaller chiefships, who saw themselves spoiled and devoured, protested against a government that had pre-occupied the imperial place but evaded the imperial obligation. It was already manifest that British supremacy was the keystone of the arch that supported the great political edifice set up by Lord Wellesley, and that unless this keystone were firmly driven home the whole fabric would be unstable and insecure. For we had now gone so far on the road toward empire that it had become impossible to stand still. About this time Mountstuart Elphinstone wrote: 'We have long since abandoned the policy which might perhaps have averted the jealousy of other Indian States, and we have stopped short in the midst of the only other line that was either safe or consistent—that of establishing our ascendency over the whole of India. In consequence we have still the odium without the energy of a conquering people, and all the responsibility of an extensive empire, without its resources or military advantages. There would be some reason in remaining in this dangerous position if we were strengthened by peace, but so far are we from that, that our provinces and the dominions of our allies are much more exposed to invasion and plunder than they would be in the time of war.'

In the meantime the condition of the whole central region was sinking from bad to worse. It has been seen that in the eighteenth century India was crowded with mercenary soldiers who followed the trade of war; and an incredibly large proportion of the population

subsisted by freebooting, a flourishing profession that had now been openly practised in India for several generations. The annexations and conquests of Lord Wellesley's era, the enlargement of our borders and of our protectorate, had led to an extensive disbandment of troops. It was reckoned by a competent authority that, at a moderate computation, this wide pacification of the country had turned loose half a million professional soldiers Many of these men, with most of the freebooting class, whose occupation was disappearing with the contraction of that field of private enterprise, had collected in central India, where, instead of diminishing and settling down as had been expected, they increased to an alarming degree. Some of the native rulers encouraged them secretly, they intimidated the rest, and no power was strong enough to suppress them. The swarming of these predatory bands, which had been a comparatively transient and occasional evil when they could range over the whole Indian continent, became a mortal plague when it was hemmed in within set bounds, for the inland countries were exhausted by endemic brigandage While the lesser principalities were thus being systematically bled to death, the great military chiefs were recruiting their forces, replenishing their treasuries, and enlarging the range of their operations, not without some prospect of recovering the formidable military footing which they had lost in the previous war

The subsidiary system, moreover, had other consequences besides those of causing the disbanding of the loose mercenary militia and the condensation of the freebooting plague As the military power of the States which contracted these treaties was conveyed into British hands, the result was to weaken the internal

authority of their rulers, by diminishing their feeling of responsibility for governing well and moderately, because they were sure of our protection in the event of attack or revolt. Undoubtedly the sense of dependence upon a higher power relaxed the energies of a native prince, who knew that in the last resort he could always call in the British government to save him from utter destruction Against these disadvantages of the subsidiary alliances must, however, be set the consideration that without British protection most of the allied States would certainly have been dismembered in the incessant warfare that prevailed wherever they were left to themselves The effect of our alliances upon the majority of these States was, therefore, to arrest the natural process of their disruption but not to strengthen the internal authority of their rulers In this manner the burden of repressing disorder within the territory of our allies followed the transfer of the duty of external defence, and became gradually shifted on to the shoulders of the British government Our policy might vary, backward or forward, we still found ourselves mounting step by step up to the high office of ultimate arbiter in every dispute and supreme custodian of the peace of all India

Under the circumstances that have just been described, the marauding bands of central India, like the Free Companies of mediaeval Europe, had prospered and multiplied, until in 1814 Amir Khan, a notable military adventurer, was living upon Rajputana with a compact army of at least 30 000 men and a strong artillery That a regular army of this calibre should have been moving at large about central India, entirely unconnected with any recognizable government or fixed territory, acknowledging no political or civil

responsibility, is decisive evidence of [illegible] disorganization. But Amir Khan's troops [illegible] some kind of discipline: they were employed [illegible] a system in some degree resembling regular [illegible] their commander's aim being to carve out a dominion for himself The true Pindári hordes had no other object but general rapine, they were immense bands of mounted robbers, their most popular leader, Cheetoo, could number no less than 10,000 horsemen; they could only subsist by irruptions into rich and fertile districts, and they were a perpetual menace to the country possessed or protected by the British power It cannot be doubted that they maintained a secret understanding with the independent Maratha rulers at Poona, Nagpore, and Gwalior, who were not particularly anxious to join in the suppression of armed bodies that spared Maratha districts while they harried British lands and the Nizam's country, and who probably remembered that in any future attempt to make head against British domination the Pindáris might prove very serviceable auxiliaries

SECTION II *The Nepal War* (1814–1816)

The war that broke out in 1814 with Nepal had inspired the Marathas with some hope of finding their opportunity in our difficulties About 1768 a chief of the Gurkhalis or Gurkhas—who are a race issuing out of the intermixture of Hindus from the plains with the hill tribes—had subdued all the highlands and valleys on the southern slopes of the Himalayas overlooking Bengal. His successors had carried their arms north-westwards along the mountain-ranges above Oudh, Rohilcund, and the provinces watered by the Ganges and the Jumna, up to the confines of the Punjab

The difficult tract of hill and forest, into which the Moghuls had never cared to penetrate, had been previously possessed by a number of petty Hindu Rájas, who subsisted to a large extent by forays into the plain country below. The Gúrkha chief, taking his lesson from what was going on in Bengal, had set up a disciplined force with which he easily exterminated the local Rájas, and his dynasty ruled, with the usual contests upon each succession, until his grandson was assassinated by conspirators in 1805. After that date the kingdom was no longer governed by a single ruler; it fell into the hands of a group of high military officers belonging to the dominant clan, who kept the hereditary king in subjection and governed Nepal in his name. As their soldiery were drilled and equipped in European fashion—for in military matters the Gurkhas have always been skilful copyists from the English model—they rapidly pushed their conquests westward over the petty hill States, and soon began to make encroachments upon the sub-Himalayan lowlands within the English border. Between the minor chiefs who lived on the skirts of the mountains and the great proprietors in Bengal there had been chronic fighting from time immemorial, for all these Nepalese border chiefs had annexed strips of land in the plains immediately below them; but now the Gurkhas had subdued all the highlands and the English had brought the low country under their authority. It followed that the constant quarrels over this debateable border soon embroiled the two governments. The Nepalese officers on the frontier encroached audaciously upon the lands of British subjects, occupied tracts belonging to Bengal, and refused to retire. At last, in 1814, when they seized two small districts, Lord Hastings sent to their govern-

ment a peremptory demand that they should evacuate, and on receiving merely evasive replies he re-occupied these districts by a detachment of troops, before whom the Gurkha officers retired quietly. But so soon as the troops had been withdrawn the Gurkhas made a sudden attack upon our police stations and massacred some twenty men. Their government, after holding a formal council, had resolved upon war, being persuaded that the English could never penetrate into the mountains of Nepal

Then ensued the first of those numerous expeditions into the interior of the great hill-ranges surrounding India, in which the Anglo-Indian government has ever since been at intervals engaged The frontier which was to be the scene of war stretched a distance of about six hundred miles, and the enemy had the command of all the passes leading up into the highlands. The attack was made by the English at three separate points, and although General Gillespie was repulsed and killed in attempting to storm a fort, yet in spite of a brave and obstinate resistance our troops gained their footing within the hills, and drove the Gurkhas out of all their positions on the west The Nepalese government was compelled to sign a treaty ceding a long strip of the lower Himalayas, with most of the adjacent forest lands, extending from the present western frontier of the Nepal State north westward as far as the Sutlej river. All the hill-country that now overhangs Rohilcund and the North-West Provinces up to the Jumna river—with the valuable belt of low lying forest that skirts the base of the outer ranges toward India—fell thus into our hands By this cession of a Himalayan province the Anglo-Indian frontier was carried up to and beyond the watershed of the highest mountains

separating India from Tibet or from Kathay; and the English dominion thenceforward became conterminous for the first time with the Chinese empire, whose government has ever since observed our proceedings with marked and intelligible solicitude. The Gúrkha chiefs of Nepal, having been thus confined within a narrow belt of highland territory immediately overlooking our most valuable province, have nevertheless maintained, through several internal revolutions, their system of military domination, and have sedulously pursued a policy of training their troops upon the European model by discipline and the importation of arms Yet from 1816, when the war ended, they have never again molested us, nor have we ever interfered with them The little kingdom of Nepal is wedged in between the two great empires of India and China, and on neither side is there any desire to break down this barrier.

SECTION III *The Peshwa and the Pindari War* (1816–1818).

In the meantime the freebooting bands of central India were increasing in numbers and audacity The Pindaris, who were openly disowned and secretly encouraged by the Maratha chiefs had made an inroad into certain districts of the Madras Presidency, carrying off great booty, they had also plundered on the frontier of Bengal Amir Khan, the Pathán leader, was besieging Jeypore, whose Rája applied for succour to the English. After much negotiation Lord Hastings succeeded not only in bringing the Rajput State of Jeypore within the English protectorate, but also in concluding a subsidiary treaty with the Bhonsla Rája of Nágpore, whereby an important member was detached from the

Maratha confederation. But this Raja soon repudiated an engagement which affected his complete independence; and under the influence of a party at his capital hostile to the English, he began to correspond secretly with the Peshwa at Poona, who had become restless, disaffected, and exceedingly impatient of British mediation in his dealings with feudatories or neighbouring States The war in Nepal, which seemed likely to be long and troublesome, encouraged among the Marathas an inclination to try conclusions again with the English. The Peshwa began to assemble his troops and collect military stores, the British Resident replied by calling in the subsidiary force, and a kind of sporadic insurrection, privily fomented by the Poona authorities, was breaking out in the country. All these threatening symptoms reached a crisis when the Gaekwar's envoy, who had been sent to Poona on a special mission under British guarantee, was assassinated, with the Peshwa's connivance, by one of his confidential favourites The murderer's surrender was extorted from the Peshwa with the greatest difficulty, by the British Resident; but he escaped from prison, and the Peshwa, who seemed about to take up arms in his defence, only lost courage and made terms just when an open rupture was becoming imminent He signed, in 1817, a treaty making cessions of territory in exchange for an increased subsidiary force, and renouncing virtually all pretensions to supremacy in the Maratha confederation

Lord Hastings now decided that the time had come when he could begin his combined operations for the suppression of the freebooting hordes, and for such a general reformation of the condition of central India as might eradicate the predatory system. The policy

of isolation had, he found, completely failed; its effect was not only to foster the spread of confusion and disorder outside our frontiers, but also to endanger the main position of the British government. The number of the Pindáris was reckoned at 40,000 horsemen; there were also two Mahommedan adventurers in command of large bodies of infantry, with artillery, quite independent of any regular government, while to these may be added a horde of loose mercenaries nominally in the service of the Marathas. Beyond the ring-fence of British territory the whole country was exposed to depredation, and the lesser States held the British responsible for the anarchy that prevailed. So Lord Hastings at last resolved to step forward as arbitrator and authoritative peacemaker, to dissolve the plundering bands, and to mark out the whole of the vast inland region into recognized rulerships, so that no part of it should be left outside the jurisdiction of some responsible authority. He relied on the supreme influence and paramount power of the British government in arms to insist, when this had been done, upon the pacification of the whole country through the chiefs to whom it should have been in severalty assigned. He projected, in short, the consummation of the work that had been begun by Lord Cornwallis, and carried very far by Lord Wellesley—the extension of our supremacy and protectorate over every native State in the interior of India.

In such a cause, however, the hearty co-operation of the Maratha princes could not reasonably be expected. Amir Khan, the Pathan leader, was persuaded or intimidated into disbanding his army and settling down on the lands guaranteed to him. But Sindia agreed reluctantly to associate himself with the campaign against the Pindáris: he delayed the departure of his troops with

the manifest purpose of watching events, and was only overawed into signing a treaty of co-operation by the display of force. The Peshwa, galled by the yoke which the recent treaty had fixed upon him, collected his forces and broke out into open hostility, attacking the British troops at Poona[1], while at Nágpore the Rája declared for him as the head of the Maratha nation, and sent his own troops against the British Residency On both occasions the Marathas were repulsed, though not without stout fighting at Nágpore; and as Holkar's army, which attempted to join the Peshwa, had been defeated at Mehidpore[2], the opposition of the Maratha powers to the Governor-General's policy of pacification soon came to an end The Peshwa, pursued by the British flying columns, fought one or two sharp actions, but his troops were at last scattered, his forts were taken, and he himself was pursued until he finally surrendered upon an assurance of suitable provision[3] Lord Hastings had determined to exclude him and his family from any further share of influence or dominion in the Dekhan, and the greater part of his territories passed under the British sovereignty. The State of Satára was reconstituted out of the Peshwa's domains, and placed under the descendant of Sivaji, the original founder of the Maratha empire, whose dynasty had been supplanted by the Peshwas, a line of hereditary prime ministers The Nágpore State had also to cede several important districts, and its military establishments passed under British control The group of ancient Rájput chiefships which had been spoiled and ransomed for years

[1] November, 1817 See a picturesque description, by an eye-witness, of this action in Grant Duff's *History of the Marathas*, vol iii ch. 18.

[2] December, 1816.

[3] June, 1818.

by the Marathas and Amír Khan, with a number of minor principalities, were placed under the immediate protection and guarantee of the British government. The tributes claimed from the lesser States by the Maratha rulers were fixed and confirmed, upon the condition that payment should be made through the British treasury.

By these measures the Maratha rulership of the Peshwa was now finally extinguished, and the three leading families that had so often opposed us—Sindia, Holkar, and the Bhonsla of Nágpore—were definitely bound over to keep the peace of India The Pindáris, who were merely the remnants of the once flourishing predatory system, the dregs of the roving bands that had harried India during a century of anarchy, were dispersed or exterminated. These formidable bands melted away with wonderful rapidity Lord Hastings notes in his diary that the actual campaign lasted only three months; and five years later Sir John Malcolm, to whom much of the credit for its success was due, reported from Central India that the Pindaris had been so effectually destroyed that their name was almost forgotten, and that hundreds of villages which had been deserted and roofless were now re-peopled All this wide region had been so exhausted by nearly a century of intolerable disorder and political dislocation, that for the vast majority of the population a strong government was above all other things the prime necessity. The Maratha States were now shut up within carefully demarcated limits, the trades of marauding conquest and of mere brigandage on a large scale were abolished, the whole species vanished with the change of those conditions of government and society by which it had been engendered. The result was to secure for our own

provinces unbroken immunity from the hostile and plundering inroads to which they were always exposed so long as rapine and violence thrived in the centre of India.

But it would have been useless to put down these enormous evils unless precautions had been also taken against their revival. Henceforward it became the universal principle of public policy that every State in India (outside the Punjab and Sinde) should make over the control of its foreign relations to the British government, should submit all external disputes to British arbitration, and should defer to British advice regarding internal management so far as might be necessary to cure disorders or scandalous misrule. A British Resident was appointed to the courts of all the greater princes as the agency for the exercise of these high functions; while the subsidiary forces and the contingents furnished by the States placed the supreme military command everywhere under British direction.

This great political settlement of central India—the disarmament and pacification of the military chiefships, and the adjustment of distinct relations of supremacy and subordination—established universal recognition of the cardinal principle upon which the fabric of British dominion in India has been built up. It completed and consolidated the policy of Lord Wellesley. The last shadow of interference by any European rival had now for the time faded away. The contest with the native States for ascendancy was finally decided, and not only the right but the duty of intervention for the security and tranquillity of the Indian people was now everywhere acknowledged, from the two seas northward up to Sinde and the Sutlej river. From the Sinde frontier at the mouths of the Indus river, down the west coast of the peninsula to Cape Comorin, and

thence northeastward again along the Bay of Bengal to the frontier of Burmah, the whole sea-line of India was under our authority. On the north we held a long belt of the Himalayan highlands, and our political jurisdiction extended to the western edge of the deserts bordering on upper Sinde and the Punjab. The largest, most important, and by far the most valuable portion of this region was now under our direct administration; the rest was under our sovereign influence. Taking the natural boundaries of India to be the ocean and the mountains, it may be said that our empire now commanded the whole circuit of its sea frontier, that it was securely settled upon a base in the Himalayas, and that its western flank was to a great extent covered by the cis-Indus desert. On two sections, and two only, the frontier was still unstable and liable to disturbance—on the north-east, where the Burmese were advancing into Assam, and on the north-west, where the Sikh kingdom beyond the Sutlej had acquired formidable fighting strength under Ranjit Singh.

CHAPTER XVII

COMPLETION OF DOMINION (1823–1849)

SECTION I *The First Burmese War*

UP to this epoch the scene of all the East India Company's wars has been within India, and for the last fifty years—from the withdrawal of the French in 1763 to the end of the Pindari war in 1818—our antagonists have been the native Indian powers As the expansion of our dominion carried us so much nearer to foreign Asiatic countries, our rapid approach to the geographical limits of India proper discovered for us fresh complications, and we were now on the brink of collision with new races. The first non-Indian power that provoked us to actual hostility had been the Gúrkha chiefship, but as Nepal lies on the southern slopes of the Himalayas its population belongs, by blood and religion, for the most part to Hinduism. The second non-Indian State that challenged us from beyond the Indian frontier was the kingdom of a people differing entirely from Indian races, the Burmese.

It is a remarkable coincidence that during the first fifty years occupied by the rise of the English dominion

in India, other rulerships were being founded simultaneously, by a not dissimilar process, around us. In the course of that period (1757–1805) the tribes of Afghanistan had been collected into subjection to one kingdom under the dynasty of Ahmed Shah, the petty chiefships, Hindu and Mahomedan, of the Punjab had been welded into a military despotism by the strong hand of Ranjit Singh; and the Rájas on the lower highlands of the Himalayas had submitted to the domination of Nepal Lastly, about the time when Clive was subduing Bengal, a Burmese military leader had established by conquest a rulership which had its capital in the plains traversed by the Irawádi river and its principal affluents, from the upper waters of those rivers down to the sea The kingdom of Burmah, founded in 1757 by Alompra's subjugation of Pegu, now included not only the open tracts about the Irawádi and the Salween—extending from the hills out of which these rivers issue to the low-lying sea-coast at their mouths—it also stretched far southward down the eastern shores of the Bay of Bengal It was absorbing all the mountainous region overhanging the eastern land frontier of India, and the Burmese armies were pressing westward across the watershed of those mountains through the upland country about the Brahmapútra towards the great alluvial plains of eastern Bengal. There had consequently been frequent disputes on that border between the Anglo-Indian and the Burmese authorities, for the dividing-line was unsettled and variable, and on both sides the landmarks had been unavoidably set forward in pioneering fashion, until they were separated only by strips of semi-dependent tribal lands and spheres of influence from which each

party desired to exclude the other. It will be remembered that along all the ranges of the mountains that cut off the Indian plains from the rest of the Asiatic continent, there runs an unbroken fringe of rugged highlands, inhabited by tribes of mixed origin who are more or less warlike and independent.

On the north-east of Bengal lay the kingdom of Assam, with a territory, now part of the British province which bears that name, interposed between the English districts or protectorates and the Burmese dominion. There had been some sanguinary contests for power among princes of the reigning house, and among powerful ministers who aspired to rule absolutely in the name of one Assamese prince or another, with the inevitable result that the defeated party called in the Burmese from across the mountains eastward Fresh troubles soon followed, for the king who had been reinstated by the Burmese troops soon quarrelled with them, finding, as usual, that a foreign army of occupation is an exceedingly dangerous remedy for civil war, and the Burmese, after putting up and down several puppets, brought matters to the ordinary conclusion by placing Assam under a governor of their own That a feeble and distracted semi-Hindu State on our frontier should be thus converted into a province of a warlike and aggressive Indo-Chinese kingdom, was by no means to the advantage of the English, with whom it is always a first principle of politics to shut out all strange intruders into India from beyond the mountains or the sea. The Burmese now held the upper waters of that great navigable river, the Brahmaputra, and of other streams flowing from the Assam hills into the sea through eastern Bengal, they were on the

crests of the mountain passes leading into the lowlands, and they were subduing or intimidating all the petty chiefs along our frontier. It has always been the practice of the English in India, as of other civilized empires in contact with barbarism, to maintain a zone of tribal lands and chiefships as a barrier or quickset hedge against trespassers upon their actual frontier, by taking these chiefships or little border principalities under their protection The Burmese were now violating this protectorate in a very menacing fashion. They were engaged in subduing all the north-east corner of India, they had taken Manipur, were making inroads into Cachár, then under British protection, and they had even claimed the British district of Sylhet In fact they were breaking through all the natural barriers that fence off India by land from eastern Asia, and were evidently seizing the issues or sally ports available for sudden descent, whenever and however they might choose, upon the level plains of Bengal They had seized, not without bloodshed, an island on the British side of the estuary which separated our territory from Aracan.

To be thus openly defied and attacked was a novelty for the English in India, but the Burmese, like the Gurkhas, having hitherto never measured themselves against civilized forces, saw no reason why they should not go on extending their dominion until they had palpably tested a neighbour's capacity to resist them When regular hostilities began, there was some very sharp skirmishing on the Assam border, in which the British troops did not always come off winners, but the despatch of a small army across the Bay of Bengal to attack Rangoon made an effective diversion, for this

was the vulnerable side, to a maritime enemy, of the Burmese kingdom. The expedition sent by Lord Amherst, then Governor-General, to Pegu, represented the first campaign undertaken by Anglo-Indian troops on the Asiatic continent beyond India. It ascended the course of the Irawádi; and the Burmese, after an obstinate defence, were compelled to submit to our terms This was a war that produced important and far-reaching consequences, because it carried the British arms for the first time beyond the Indian frontier, extended our dominion into a totally different country, and subjected new Asiatic races to our sovereignty. The annexation of Aracan and the Tenasserim provinces placed in English hands almost all that part of the coast which fronts India across the Bay of Bengal[1], throwing Burmah back over the watershed of the mountain range that runs parallel to this part of the sea-line. We had now brought a large population, different from the Indians in origin, manners, language, and religion, within the jurisdiction of the Indian empire, and the expansive and levelling forces of European power had been set travelling in a fresh direction, upon another line where we were destined to encounter just so much resistance as would compel us to advance by the mere act of overcoming it. A secondary but important consequence of the defeat of the Burmese was their recognition of our protectorate over upper Assam, Cachár, and Manipur, the tract beyond Bengal and along the Brahmaputra river

[1] Except the maritime province of Pegu, which includes the mouths of the Irawádi river, and which was not annexed until after the war of 1852.

which is now incorporated within the great north-eastern Chief-Commissionership of Assam.

The acquisitions made by the Burmese war had thus effectually sealed up and secured our eastern frontier, as the Gurkha war had quieted the only State that could molest us along the line of the north-eastern Himalayas. In 1826, when a usurper had seized the Bhurtpore chiefship, Lord Combermere took by assault the strong fortress of Bhurtpore, before which Lord Lake had failed in 1805 Within India there now remained no more than two sovereign powers, the English and the Sikhs, for the Amírs of Sinde scarcely fell within the category of Indian rulers Ranjít Singh, under whom the Sikh domination in the Punjab reached its climax early in this century, had acquiesced, after some indications of hostility, in the policy of maintaining friendly relations with the British government. He had consequently signed in 1809 a treaty that confined his territory to the north and west of the Sutlej river, with the exception of a strip of country on the south bank, in which he was bound not to place troops This exception had important consequences later, but the broad line of demarcation between the two States was the river, and this arrangement preserved unbroken for nearly forty years the peace of our northern frontier

Section II. *Lord William Bentinck* (1828–1835).

The Governor-Generalship of Lord William Bentinck has the distinctive characteristic of representing in Anglo-Indian history a period of brief and rare tran-

quillity, it was an era of liberal and civilizing administration, of quiet material progress, and of some important moral and educational reforms Lord Amherst, whom Lord W Bentinck succeeded, had just closed a costly and troublesome Burmese war; and with Lord Auckland, who followed him, began our disastrous campaigns in Afghanistan. Between Amherst and Auckland came an interval of calm rulership that was well employed in the work of domestic improvements and internal organization, favoured by the current of public opinion and political discussion in England The liberal spirit which had accomplished at home the enfranchisement of Roman Catholics, and which was insisting on Parliamentary Reform, had to some extent influenced the views of Englishmen towards India The expiration of the term of the East India Company's Charter, and the debate over its renewal, had drawn attention to Indian affairs; the Act which was passed in 1833 to prolong the Charter removed the last vestige of the Company's commercial monopoly, and finally completed the transformation of the old trading corporation into a special agency for the government of a vast Asiatic dependency.

It was Lord W Bentinck who issued, a few months before his term of office expired, the Resolution which finally decreed that English should be the official language of India This important State paper is based on Macaulay's famous Minute, in which he utterly routed the party that still held to the system of promoting learning and literature in India through the medium of Oriental languages The controversy arose out of a question as to the distribution of educational grants from the public purse, and Macaulay argued victoriously in favour of English as the language which

gives the key to all true knowledge, and as the only proper means of pursuing the higher studies. His brilliant and impetuous assault upon Orientalism beat down all opposition. He declared that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia, and that it was not decent to use the public funds for bribing the Indian youth to read books full of monstrous errors That they also contained the ancient religion, philosophy, and poetry of India was a consideration that he appears not to have taken into account, and it may be admitted that Macaulay, with all his genius, lacked sympathy with the deeper and more delicate fibres of national sensitiveness [1] Lord W Bentinck thereupon issued orders, in accordance with Macaulay's view, that were received, on their arrival in England, with some doubt and demur It seems to have been James Mill, then an influential officer at the India House, who drafted a formidable censure upon Bentinck's proceedings, laying stress upon the impolicy of forcing upon the natives of India by an abrupt reversal of educational policy, a superficial layer of English culture, that would be used rather as a passport to public employ than as a channel for the acquisition of solid knowledge Mill and Macaulay were old antagonists, and Macaulay evidently thought the Orientalists talked insufferable nonsense, nevertheless it can

[1] Matthew Arnold has related that, when it was proposed in England to buy certain precious Irish manuscripts for the British Museum, Macaulay wrote that he saw nothing in the whole collection worth purchasing, except the correspondence of Lord Melville on the American war If he thought ancient Celtic literature mere rubbish, it was not likely that he should have set much value on Sanskrit or Arabic treatises

hardly be said, on retrospection, that the [illegible] argument was altogether on his side. The [illegible] appears never to have been issued; the higher education became almost exclusively English, and all restrictive press laws were very soon afterwards abolished. The close connexion between these two powerful stimulants of intellectual fermentation is obvious enough, and accordingly the new policy has since produced important and far-reaching consequences.

But the chief title of this Governor-General to posthumous fame rests on the Act which he had the courage to pass for putting an end to the burning of Indian widows In these days such a measure may appear obviously just and necessary, but in 1829 it was not adopted without much hesitation and many misgivings, for the real nature of public opinion on such subjects among the natives of India was then very imperfectly understood The point at which law will be supported by natural morality in overruling superstitious sanctions is always difficult to discover, but we know that law and morality have a very complex interaction upon each other, so that what the positive law refuses to tolerate often becomes immoral, and what morality condemns the law has to denounce. It may be guessed that inhuman or scandalous rites are never really popular, while it is certain that whenever a civil ordinance takes its stand upon an indisputable ethical basis, religion has to give way The crime was chiefly prevalent among the docile and habitually submissive races of lower Bengal, and the Governor-General rightly inferred that its peremptory suppression, far from involving political danger, would be accepted as liberation from a yoke which the people themselves lacked energy to throw off.

Of Lord William Bentinck's foreign policy there is not much to be said. He was the first—indeed, he has been the last—Governor-General in whose time unbroken peace has been given to British India, if we exclude the despatch of troops to put down local insurrections in Mysore and in Coorg. In the management of some troublesome business with Hyderabad and the Rajpút States he could rely on the skill and experience of Sir Charles Metcalfe, and he adjusted with success the much more important question of our diplomatic relations with Ranjít Singh, the ruler of the Punjab. But his commercial treaty with Ranjít Singh, and his convention with the Amirs of Sinde for opening the Indus river to British commerce, were in point of fact the preliminary steps that led us, a few years later, out upon the wide and perilous field of Afghan politics. The possibility of the overland invasion of India, and the question of the measures necessary for the security of our north-western frontier, were now occupying the minds of India's rulers, and the discussion was beginning that has never since ended.

SECTION III. *Afghanistan*

Beyond the Punjab, on the further side of the Afghan mountains, there were movements that were reviving in India the ever sensitive apprehensions of insecurity. The march of Russia across Asia, suspended by the Napoleonic wars, had latterly been resumed; her pressure was felt throughout all the central regions from the Caspian Sea to the Oxus; and by the treaty of Turcomantchai (1828) she had

established a preponderant influence over Persia. From that time forward our whole policy and all our strategic dispositions upon the north-west frontier have been directed toward anticipating or counteracting the movements or supposed intentions of Russia. To the English diplomatists of that day it seemed as if our original line of confederate defence had been drawn too widely, because Persia's discomfiture had proved that we had no means of upholding her integrity against Russian attack. So we negotiated in 1828 a release from our treaty obligations to aid Persia in resisting aggression, and we fell back upon Afghanistan as our defensible barrier It followed that as England receded Russia pressed on, occupied the diplomatic ground that we had vacated, and converted the Persian power into an instrument for the furtherance of her own interests, which were not ours As Persia had just ceded to Russia some districts in the north-west, she was encouraged, by way of compensation, to revive a long-standing claim upon territory belonging to Afghanistan across her north-eastern borders In 1837, therefore, the Shah of Persia, who claimed western Afghanistan as belonging of right to his crown, was preparing for an attack upon Herat, the chief frontier city of the Afghans on that side, and the key to all routes leading from Persia into India Some of the leading Afghan Sirdars were in correspondence with the Persian king, and Shah Soojah, the hereditary prince, who had been driven out by a new Afghan dynasty, was an exile in the Punjab, whence he made unsuccessful attempts to recover his throne, soliciting aid both from the Sikhs and the English Shah Soojah represented the legitimate line of descent from Ahmed Shah Abdallee, who had created the Afghan kingdom,

but a few years before this time his family had been supplanted by the sons of a powerful minister. This is a well-known form of dynastic changes in Asia, produced by the natural tendency of rulership to fall out of the hands of those who cannot keep it, into the grasp of those who can It will be remembered that the royal house of the Maratha empire had been evicted in the eighteenth century by a ministerial dynasty, the Peshwas, and in the present century a precisely similar revolution has taken place in Nepal

The cardinal point of the whole Asiatic question was now becoming fixed in Afghanistan From its situation, its natural strength, its high strategic value, this country has been always a position of the greatest importance to the rulers of India, and the claims of Persia brought it prominently upon the political foreground. The British government at home laid down the principle, big with momentous consequence, that the independence and integrity of Afghanistan are essential to the security of India, and missions from India had already explored the Indus and been received by the Amír Dost Mohamed at Kábul When, therefore, the Shah of Persia in person, attended by some Russian officers, led an army in 1837 against Herat, and when the Afghan Amír, disappointed in his hopes of an English alliance, was negotiating with a Russian agent, it will be easily understood that all the elements of alarm and mistrust drew speedily to a head An English expedition to the Persian Gulf occupied the island of Karrak, and made a demonstration against southern Persia that was quite sufficient to provide the Shah with a good excuse for retiring from Herat, where his assault on the town had failed and his supplies were scanty. But the withdrawal from Herat

by no means fulfilled views now prevalent both in England and India, with regard to our system of precautionary defence. In London the ministers had declared that 'the welfare of our Eastern possessions require that we shall have on our western frontier an ally interested in resisting aggression, in the place of chiefs ranging themselves in subservience to a hostile power'; and they had pressed Lord Auckland to take decisive measures in Afghanistan. The Governor-General proceeded to conclude, with the full approbation of the English ministry, a tripartite treaty, by which the British government and Ranjit Singh covenanted with Shah Soojah to reinstate him in Afghanistan by force of arms. Lord Auckland declared that the unsettled state of that country had produced 'a crisis which imperiously demands the interference of the British government,' and that he would continue to prosecute with vigour his measures for the substitution of a friendly for a hostile power in the eastern Afghan provinces, and for 'the establishment of a permanent barrier against schemes of aggression on our north-west frontier.' In 1838 a British army marched through Sinde up to the Beluch passes to Kandahar, with the avowed object of expelling Dost Mohamed, the ruling Amir, and restoring Shah Soojah to his throne at Kábul.

This, then, was the position of the English dominion in India at the opening of Queen Victoria's memorable reign. The names of our earlier allies and enemies—of the Nizám, Oudh, the Maratha princes, and the Mysore State—were still writ large on the map, but they had fallen far into the rear of our onward march; while in front of us were only Ranjit Singh, ruling the Punjab up to the Afghan hills, and the Sinde Amirs.

the Indus valley. The curtain was just rising upon the first act of the long drama, not yet in our own time played out, of central Asian politics What did this new departure imply? Not that we had any quarrel with the Afghans, from whom we were separated by the five rivers whose floods unite in the Indus. It meant that after half a century's respite the English believed themselves to be again in danger of contact with a rival European influence on Asiatic ground; and that whereas in the previous century they had only to fear such rivalry on the sea-coast, they now had certain notice of its gradual approach overland, from beyond the Oxus and the Paropam sus

The story of our first campaign in Afghanistan is well known Shah Soojah was easily replaced on the throne, and the English remained in military occupation of the country round Kábul and Kandahar for about two years But the whole plan had been ill-conceived politically, and from a strategic point of view the expedition had been rash and dangerous The base of our operations for this invasion of Afghanistan lay in Sinde, a foreign State under rulers not well affected towards the English, while on our flank, commanding all the communications with India, lay the Punjab, another foreign State with a numerous army, watching our proceedings with vigilant jealousy Such a position was in every way so untenable, the advance movement was so obviously premature, that no one need wonder at the lamentable failure which ended our first attempt to extend the British protectorate beyond the limits of India.

The occupation of their country by a foreign army was profoundly resented by the free tribes of Afghanistan, whose patriotism equals their fanaticism, and

who have always fought resolutely for their national independence. On his first reappearance among his countrymen Shah Soojah was to some extent welcomed, but it was quite certain that whatever popularity might accrue to him as their ruler by birthright would rapidly decrease if his throne continued to be surrounded and supported by English troops, for the aphorism that one can do anything with bayonets except sit upon them has much truth even in Asia. Probably the best course that could have been taken would have been to withdraw our army, leaving Shah Soojah to rely upon his personal influence, on the fact that he held possession, and on the disciplined local regiments that had been raised for his service But Lord Auckland had proclaimed, as one main object of his expedition, the establishment of the integrity and independence of Afghanistan, and it was obvious that this was not to be made very sure by leaving Shah Soojah in charge of the country Yet this chance of success, though precarious, was really the only one, for the alternative was to prolong our military occupation of a mountainous region with a severe winter climate, where supplies are scarce and communications so difficult that combined operations from one centre are constantly interrupted, among a people who pass their lives in guerilla warfare This alternative, however, was unluckily adopted. Sir William Macnaghten, the chief political authority, had heard that the Russians were marching from Orenburgh or Khiva, and Dost Mohamed, the Amír whom we had expelled, was hovering about the northern provinces, while the outlying districts were still unruly So Macnaghten determined to consolidate Shah Soojah's government before he retired. But the attempt to raise a kind of standing army for Shah

Soojah stirred up fatal jealousies among all the powerful chiefs of the Afghan clans, who, like feudal nobles and free folk everywhere, defer to a king but detest a master. Disaffection grew and spread, until in 1841 partial revolts and local risings culminated in universal insurrection. The supplies of the English troops ran short, they had been wearied out by incessant skirmishing, they were under an incapable commander, their outposts were besieged or cut off, and Macnaghten, hoping vainly for a turn of fortune, delayed evacuation of Kábul until the winter had set it. Then, when retreat became inevitable, a series of inconceivable blunders led to the destruction of the whole British force in their passage through the defiles between Kábul and Jelalabad. The fort at Jelalabad was gallantly held until it was relieved in the autumn of 1842 by General Pollock, who marched up to Kabul and re-occupied the city, while at Kandahar General Nott baffled all the attempts of the Afghans to dislodge him

But in 1841 the Whig ministry, who were the authors of the policy of intervention in Afghanistan, had been displaced, and early in 1842 Lord Ellenborough succeeded Lord Auckland as Governor General. He at once issued orders for the withdrawal of all British troops from Kandahar and Jelalabad, nor would the British government have escaped the discredit of a hasty and somewhat dishonourable retirement if the military commanders had not taken upon themselves the responsibility of bolder measures By the end of 1842, nevertheless, all our forces had been quietly brought away. Dost Mohamed had been restored to power in Kábul, the country had been evacuated, and the policy of bringing Afghanistan within the sphere of British influence, which was now definitely abandoned,

lay dormant until it was successfully revived, under very different conditions, nearly forty years afterwards.

SECTION IV. *Sinde and the Punjab.*

In 1839 the territory of the Amirs of Sinde, in the valley of the Indus, had been brought within our political control by Lord Auckland, who needed it as a stepping-stone and as a basis for his operations toward south Afghanistan The port of Kurrachee, near the Indus mouth, had been seized, and the river had been thrown open to British commerce. When Lord Ellenborough determined to retire from Afghanistan, he was very reluctant to give up the valuable position that we had taken up in Sinde, he desired, on the contrary, to acquire permanent possession of the stations that our troops had occupied temporarily, and he took advantage of delay in the payment of tribute to press for territorial cessions Sir Charles Napier, who had been sent to Sinde as a congenial representative of demands that were likely to produce war, submitted to the Governor-General a memorandum arguing that, while we were bound to insist on the rigid observance of treaties, yet such strict punctilio would confine us permanently within the limits of the stations which the treaty assigned to us, and would thus prevent us from interposing for the general good of the Sinde people. 'Is it possible,' he asked, 'that such a state of things can long continue?' and 'if this reasoning is correct, would it not be better to come to results at once, by annexing the places which we now hold temporarily?' Proceeding to consider 'how we might go to work in a matter so critical,' he enclosed a memorandum of five cases in which the Amirs 'seemed to have departed

from the terms or spirit of their engagements,' and he urged that it would not be harsh, but on the contrary humane, to coerce them into ceding the places required. Accordingly Sir Charles Napier was empowered by Lord Ellenborough to press upon the Sinde rulers a new treaty, framed on the basis of exchanging tribute for territory. The Amírs signed it, but mustered their troops and attacked the British Residency at their capital; whereupon Sir Charles Napier marched into their country and gained a decisive victory over their army at Meeánee, in February, 1843. The results were the deposition of the Sinde Amírs, and the transfer to the British dominion of the lower Indus valley, whereby we obtained possession of Kurrachee and the Indus estuary, and brought within our control the whole unbroken circuit of the Indian sea-coast. In 1844, however, Lord Ellenborough's administration was terminated by his recall, and he was succeeded by Sir Henry Hardinge.

In the meantime, from the date of Ranjit Singh's death in 1839, the Sikh government of the Punjab, which had lasted barely thirty years, had been rapidly falling into dilapidation. One chief after another had assumed the administration, and had been overthrown or assassinated. In Asia a new kingdom is almost always founded by some able leader with a genius for military organization who can raise and command an effective army, which he employs not only to beat rivals in the field but also to break down all minor chiefships, to disarm every kind of possible opposition within his borders, and generally to level every barrier that might limit his personal authority. But he who thus sweeps away all means of resistance

leaves himself no supports, for support implies the capacity to resist; and the very strength and keenness of the military instrument that he has forged renders it doubly dangerous to his successors If the next ruler's heart or hand fail him, there is no longer any counterpoise to the overpowering weight of the sword in the political balance, and the State or the dynasty is upset The Sikh dominion had been established in the spirit of religious brotherhood and revolt against Mahomedan oppression, and while such popular, almost democratic, forces, were immensely strong when condensed into driving power for a well-handled military despotism, they were certain to become ungovernable and to explode if any error or weakness were shown in guiding the machine None of Ranjít Singh's sons, real or reputed, had inherited his talents, or could manage the fierce soldiery with whom he had conquered the Punjab, driven back the Afghans across the Indus into their mountains, and annexed Kashmir His eldest and authentic son, Kharrak Singh, died within a year; his reputed son, Sher Singh, the last who endeavoured to maintain his father's policy of friendship with the British, was soon murdered with his son and the prime minister, by a conspiracy The chiefs and ministers who endeavoured to govern after Sher Singh's death were removed by internecine strife, mutinous outbreaks, and assassinations The Sikh State was on the verge of dissolution by anarchy, for all power had passed into the hands of committees of regimental officers appointed by an army that was wild with religious ardour, and furiously suspicious of its own government. The Queen-mother, Ranjit Singh's widow, and her infant son Dhuleep Singh, were recognized as nominal representatives of the reigning house, but they were liable

at any moment to be consumed by the next eruption of sanguinary caprice, and their only hope of preservation lay in finding some outlet abroad for the forces which had reduced the Sikh State to violent internal anarchy. For this purpose it was manifestly their interest to launch their turbulent army across the Sutlej against the English, into a collision that would certainly weaken and probably destroy it. The military leaders were not blind to the motives with which they were encouraged to march upon the English frontier, but their patriotism had been excited by rumours of the advance of the British army, for the Governor-General (Sir Henry Hardinge), fearing some disorderly inroad, was bringing up troops to reinforce his outposts. There had also been some inopportune frontier disputes, which had embittered the Lahore government, not altogether unreasonably, against the English. When, therefore, the Sikh soldiers were taunted with questions whether they would tamely submit to European domination, they answered by crossing the Sutlej river, which was the strategical frontier, and entrenching themselves on the south-eastern bank, in territory which, though it belonged to Lahore, the Lahore government was bound by treaty not to enter with any considerable armed force. This was taken to be an act of war, and in December 1845 they were met by the British army. On our side the preparations were incomplete, we had undervalued both the strength and the activity of the enemy, and we had been so long accustomed to easy victories on the open plains of India that the resolute defence of their field entrenchments made by the Sikhs, and their well-served artillery, took us by surprise. In the first battle, at Moodkee, we paid dearly for our success, and three days later, at Firozshah, began the

most bloody and obstinate contest ever fought by Anglo-Indian troops, at the end of which the English army was left in bare possession of its camping-ground, in a situation of imminent peril from the approach of the Sikh reserve forces under Tej Singh But the English maintained a bold front, Tej Singh retired, and, in the two battles that followed (Aliwal and Sobraon) the Sikhs, fighting hardily and fiercely, were driven back across the Sutlej and compelled to abandon further resistance in the field [1] The Governor-General occupied Lahore in February 1846 with 20 000 men, Ranjit Singh's infant son was placed on the throne under English tutelage, some cessions of territory were exacted, the Sikh army was reduced, and for two years the Punjab was administered as a State under the general superintendence and protection of the British government

But the expedient of placing the machinery of native government under temporary European superintendence can succeed only when the irresistible authority of the superintending power is universally felt and recognized The system is unstable because it does not pretend to permanence, it lacks the direct and weighty pressure required to keep down the smouldering elements of military revolt Although the Sikhs were in number not more than one-sixth of the population of the Punjab, they were united by the recollection of rulership, and the fighting men, who were justly proud of having played an even match against the English, were not yet inclined to settle down again to peaceful agriculture At the Lahore court intrigue and jealousies prevailed; and in the outlying districts there was more than one focus of discontent In April 1848 the assassination at

[1] Battle of Firozshah, Dec. 21, 1845. Battle of Sobraon, terminating the campaign, Feb 10, 1846

Multán of two British officers was the signal for an insurrection that led to a general rising of the military classes, a reassemblage of the old *Khalsa* Sikh army, and a second trial of strength with the British troops. At Chilianwála (January 1849) the English general, who displayed very little tactical skill, lost 2,400 men and officers before he won the day, but at Goojerat (February, 1849) the Sikh army, after a stubborn combat, was at last overthrown by so shattering a defeat that the English were left undisputed masters of the whole country

These transactions followed the natural course of events and consequences Contact had produced collision, and collision had terminated in the overthrow of an unstable and distracted government We had thus been compelled to break down with our own hands the very serviceable barrier against inroads from central Asia that had been set up for us fifty years earlier in north India by the Sikhs It was impossible that we should leave the country vacant and exposed to an influx of foreign Mahomedans, and it had become a matter of growing importance that we should have the gates of India in our own custody for the line of Russian advance toward the Oxus, though distant, was declared, and in the last war the Afghans had joined the Sikhs as auxiliaries That Lord Dalhousie[1], after mature deliberation, determined against renewing the precarious experiment of a protected native rulership in the Punjab, must now be acknowledged to have been fortunate, for if there had been a great independent State across the Sutlej when our own sepoys revolted, eight years later, the Sikhs might have found the opportunity difficult to resist Before the commencement of hostilities with us in 1845 they had made

[1] Governor General, 1848-56.

several attempts to shake the loyalty of our native army, nor had the spectacle of the Sikh soldiery overawing their government and dictating their own rate of pay been absolutely lost upon all our regiments The Governor-General's proclamation of 1849, annexing the Punjab to the British crown, carried our territorial frontier across the Indus right up to the base of the Afghan hills, finally extinguished the long rivalship of the native Indian powers, and absorbed under our sovereignty the last kingdom that remained outside the pale of British empire in India

After this manner, therefore, and with the full concurrence of the English nation as expressed through its Parliament, have successive Governors-General pushed on during the nineteenth century by forced marches to complete dominion in India, fulfilling Lord Clive's prophecy and disproving his forebodings The long resistance to our universal supremacy culminated and ended in the bloody but decisive campaigns against the Sikh army Henceforward all our campaigns against Asiatic powers were to be outside and around India, for the consolidation of the British empire as a State of first-class magnitude, extending from the sea to the mountains, disturbed all neighbouring rulerships within the wide orbit of its attraction, and affected the whole political system of Asia.

SECTION V *Lower Burmah.*

Lord Dalhousie had scarcely reduced the Punjab and planted the British standard at Peshawar, when he became involved in the disputes with the Burmese kingdom which led to an important annexation of territory in the south-east. The government of Burmah,

which has always been as obstinate and foolhardy in its dealings with foreigners as the Chinese have been far-seeing and comparatively temperate, refused either apology or indemnity for the injurious treatment by its officers of British subjects Yet the Burmese war of 1826 ought to have convinced less intelligent rulers that they were at the mercy of a strong maritime power in the Bay of Bengal, which could occupy their whole seaboard, blockade their only outlets, and penetrate inland up the Irawadi river These steps, in fact, the Governor-General found himself compelled to take, with the result that Pegu, a country inhabited by a race that the Burmese had subdued, fell easily into our hands, and was retained when the Burmese armies had been defeated and driven out This conquest made the British possessions continuous along the eastern shores of the Bay of Bengal, and placed the English once more in a position of the kind which seems to have been everywhere peculiarly favourable to the expansion of dominion The possession of a flat and fertile deltaic province at the outflow of a great river, whether in Asia or in Africa, enables a maritime power to settle itself securely on the land with a base on the sea, it gives control of a great artery of commerce, and provides an easy water-way inland With these advantages, and as the people of such a province are usually industrious and unwarlike, an enterprising intruder is easily carried upstream by the course of events, and to this general rule our progress in Burmah certainly affords no exception As our settlement at Calcutta, upon the Ganges estuary, led to the conquest of Bengal, as our occupation of Kurrachee by the Indus was followed by the taking of Sinde, and as our position at Cairo necessitates a frontier in Upper Egypt—so the planting of

a new British capital at Rangoon, near the mouth of the Irawádi, was a first step toward a march up the river to Mandalay [1].

SECTION VI *Interior Annexations. The Sepoy Mutiny.*

Having conquered two provinces on two diametrically opposite frontiers of the empire, Lord Dalhousie turned his attention to the interior When, in 1818, the power of the Maratha Peshwas was extinguished, the titular Maratha king, Sivaji's descendant, had been released from his state prison and the principality of Satára had been conferred on him by Lord Hastings On the death, without heirs, of his successor in 1848, Lord Dalhousie refused to sanction the adoption of an heir He laid down the principle that the British government is bound in duty as well as in policy to take possession of a subordinate State that has clearly and indubitably lapsed to the sovereignty by total failure of heirs natural, unless there should be some strong reason to the contrary Satara was accordingly absorbed, Jhansi followed in 1853, and in 1854 came the lapse of Nágpore, when Lord Dalhousie emphatically declared that 'unless I believed the prosperity and the happiness of its inhabitants would be promoted by their being placed permanently under British rule, no other advantage which could arise out of the measure would move me to propose it.' There has never been any doubt about the recognized principle of public policy, based on long usage and tradition, that no Indian principality can pass to an adopted heir without the assent and confirmation of the paramount English government Lord Dalhousie did not deny that succession might pass by adoption, but he

[1] Annexation of Pegu proclaimed, December 20, 1852

claimed and exercised the prerogative of refusing assent, on grounds of political expediency, in the case of States which, either as the virtual creation of the British government, or from their former position, stood to that government in the relation of subordinate or dependent principalities And if he withheld assent the State underwent incorporation into British territory by lapse Nothing, thought the Governor-General, could be more fortunate for the subjects of a native dynasty than its extinction by this kind of political euthanasia It may be worth while to add here that this doctrine of lapse is now practically obsolete, having been superseded by the formal recognition, in Lord Canning's Governor-Generalship, of the right of ruling chiefs, on the failure of heirs natural, to adopt successors according to the laws or customs of their religion, their race, or their family, so long as they are loyal to the crown and faithful to their engagements. The extent to which confidence has been restored by this edict is shown by the curious fact that since its promulgation a childless ruler very rarely adopts in his own life time An heir presumptive, who knows that he is to succeed and may possibly grow impatient if his inheritance is delayed, is for various obscure reasons not desired by politic princes so that the duty of nominating a successor is often left to the widows who know their husband's mind and have every reason for wishing him long life

The Punjab and Pegu were conquests of war, the States of Satara Jhansi, and Nagpore had fallen in by lapse The kingdom of Oudh is the only great Indian State of which its ruler has been dispossessed upon the ground of intolerable misgovernment At the beginning of this century the Vizier had pledged himself by

a treaty made with Lord Wellesley to establish such a system of administration as would be conducive to the prosperity of his subjects, and it was also agreed that the Vizier would always advise with and act in conformity with the counsel of the Company's officers. These pledges had been so entirely and continuously neglected that the whole of Oudh had fallen into constantly increasing confusion, until it subsided into violent disorder, tumults, brigandage, and widespread oppression of the people In fact the kingdom was only sustained artificially under a series of incapable rulers, by the external pressure of the British dominions surrounding it, and by the presence of a subsidiary British force at the capital The formal and even menacing warnings sent from time to time by the Governors-General to the Oudh government were as ineffectual as such intimations usually are when addressed to persons without strength or inclination to profit by them It was impossible that the support of British troops stationed within the country could continue to be given to such a regime, while to withdraw those troops and disown all responsibility would have only let loose anarchy And as the alternative of the temporary sequestration of the king's authority was rejected, on deliberation, as a dangerous half-measure, Her Majesty's government determined to assume the administration and to vest the territories of Oudh in the East India Company This was done by proclamation in February 1856, and before the end of that month Lord Dalhousie made over the Governor-Generalship to Lord Canning

The British empire seemed now to have reached its zenith of peace, power, and prosperity, for the territory

under its direct government had been very greatly enlarged, its frontier line had crossed the Indus on the north-west and the Irawádi on the south-east, and throughout all this vast dominion law and order appeared to prevail. But those peculiar symptoms of unrest, which Shakespeare calls the cankers of a calm world, are still in Asia (as formerly in Europe) the natural sequel of a protracted war time, when the total cessation of fighting and the general pacification of the whole country leave an insubordinate mercenary army idle and restless From 1838 to 1848 hostilities had been intermittent but incessantly recurring, the sepoys had been in the field against the Afghans, the Beluchis of Sinde, the Maratha insurgents of Gwalior, and the Sikhs of the Punjab, and in 1852 they were engaged in the second expedition against the Burmese Except in the calamitous retreat from Kabul in 1841-42, where a whole division was lost, the Anglo Indian troops had been constantly victorious, but in Asia a triumphant army, like the Janissaries or the Mamelukes, almost always becomes ungovernable so soon as it becomes stationary The sepoys of the Bengal army imagined that all India was at their feet, while in 1856 the annexation of Oudh, which was the province that furnished that army with most of its high caste recruits, touched their pride and affected their interests. When, therefore, the greased cartridges roused their caste prejudices they turned savagely against their English officers, and broke out into murderous mutiny

In suppressing the wild fanatic outbreak of 1857 we were compelled to sweep away the last shadows, that had long lost substance, of names and figures once illustrious and formidable in India The phantom of a Moghul emperor and his court vanished from Delhi;

the last pretender to the honours of the Maratha Peshwa disappeared from Cawnpore, the direct government of all our Indian territories passed from the Company to the Crown in 1858 The supremacy of that government now stands uncontested, in opinion and sentiment as well as in fact, throughout the whole dominion The extinction of the last vestige of dynastic opposition or rivalry has been the signal for the beginning of a modern phase of political life, for the complete recognition of our Indian empire, and for the formation within the State of parties which, however they may differ in administrative views, aspirations, and aims, are agreed in the principle of loyalty to the English crown

CHAPTER XVIII [1]

THE BRITISH DOMINION IN ASIA

At the present moment, therefore, Her Majesty the Queen-Empress surveys all India united under her sovereignty, whether directly administered, or through allied and friendly princes And since upper Burmah came under her sceptre in 1886, an Indo-Chinese dependency, side by side with her Indian empire, has been formed by the incorporation of a wide region that extends along the Irawadi and Salween rivers, and touches at certain points the western bank of the upper Mekong, the stream which has just been taken by the French as the present boundary of their advance upward from the south east

But it must always be remembered that in India the political jurisdiction of the English has at no time been commensurate with the districts under their administration From the beginning of this century, at any rate, the empire has been composed partly of provinces and partly of States under our protection and paramount influence With this composite formation its position and character have latterly been undergoing

[1] See Note at the end of this chapter

an extensive and significant development. And since this remarkable change of situation must be largely ascribed to the consistent operation of the policy of protectorates, some account of the origin and effects of that policy may serve to explain how, by the process of expansion, the British dominion in India has become the British dominion in Asia.

The system of protectorates has been practised from time immemorial as a method whereby the great conquering and commercial peoples masked, so to speak, their irresistible advance, and have regulated the centripetal attraction of greater over lesser masses of territory. It was much used by the Romans, whose earlier relations with Asia and Africa were not unlike our own[1] The motives have been different—sometimes political, sometimes military, sometimes commercial—the consequences have been invariably the same It is used politically as a convenient method of extending various degrees of power, of appropriating certain attributes of sovereignty, without affirming full jurisdiction It has become the particular device whereby one powerful State forestalls another in the occupation of some position, or scientific frontier line, or intermediate tract that has a strategical and particularly a defensive value It is employed to secure command of routes, coaling stations, or trading posts whenever one nation desires to be beforehand with an enterprising competitor Under this system, applied in these various manners, the extra-territorial liabilities of England all over the world are rapidly increasing, and our frontiers are rapidly expanding

Now, the origin and extension of our protectorates

[1] The supreme principle of the Roman government was to acknowledge no frontier power with equal rights. Mommsen, *Provinces of the Roman Empire*, ii. 51.

on the Asiatic mainland follow a clear and almost uniform process of development. Just as a fortress or a line of entrenchments requires an open space around or in front of it, so it is manifestly advantageous for the security of an outlying frontier province to keep the foreign territory adjoining it free from the intrusion or occupation of powerful neighbours. There is no great objection to neighbours who are merely troublesome, such as tribes who may be turbulent and predatory, or even petty States that may be occasionally unfriendly, if they are not strong enough to be seriously dangerous It is always a question whether the most unruly barbarian is not, on the whole, a much better neighbour than a highly civilized but heavily armed State of equal calibre In the case of the free tribe or the petty despot, although the tranquillity of the common border may suffer, it is possible to bring them gradually into pacific habits and closer subordination In the case of the civilized State, we undoubtedly obtain a well-defined and properly controlled frontier on both sides of it, but it will be also a frontier that needs a vigilant patrol, that will probably require fortifications, garrisons, and constant watching of all movements, diplomatic and military, beyond the exact line that divides the contiguous territories

It is probably due to our insular traditions that the English in Asia are very susceptible about the distrust and danger inseparable from a frontier that is a mere geographical line across which a man may step. They have no such borderline in Europe, except perhaps at Gibraltar, and they have always been naturally reluctant to come to these close quarters with any formidable Asiatic rival. Upon this principle it has long been the policy of our Indian government to bring under our

protective influence, whether or not they desired it, the native States, or chiefships, or tribes, whose territory has marched with our own boundaries; the reciprocal understanding being that we undertake to safeguard them from foreign aggression on the condition that they shall have no dealings with any foreign power other than England We surround ourselves, in this manner, with a zone of land, sometimes narrow, sometimes very broad, which is placed under political taboo so far as concerns rival powers whose hostility may be serious, and thus our political influence radiates out beyond the line of our actual possession, spreading its skirts widely and loosely over the adjacent country The particular point, therefore, that it is intended here to set out distinctly is, that the true frontier of the British dominion in Asia, the line which we are more or less pledged to guard, from which we have warned off trespassers, does not by any means tally with the outer edge of the immense territory over which we exercise administrative jurisdiction, in which all the people are British subjects for whom our governments make laws The true frontier includes not only this territory, but also large regions over which the English crown has established protectorates of different kinds and grades, varying according to circumstances and specific conditions This protectorate may involve the maintenance of internal order, or it may amount only to a vague sovereignty, or it may rest on a bare promise to ward off unprovoked foreign aggression But, whatever may be the particular class to which the protectorate belongs, however faint may be the shadow of authority that we choose to throw over the land, its object is to affirm the right of excluding a rival influence, and the right of exclusion carries with it the duty of defence The outer limits

of the country which we are prepared to defend is what must be called our frontier

In order to apply this principle to our Asiatic frontiers, and to explain why they have been so moveable, we must now run rapidly along the line which demarcates them at this moment Passing over the very complicated case of Egypt, we may begin our Asiatic protectorates with Aden, at the bottom of the Red Sea. From time immemorial the movement of the sea-borne trade between India and Egypt has pivoted, so to speak, upon Aden. It is now the first stepping-stone across the Asiatic waters towards our Indian Empire, the westernmost point of English occupation on the Asiatic mainland, and it furnishes a good example in miniature of the manner in which protectorates are formed We have taken and fortified Aden for the command of the water-passage into the Red Sea, but our actual possession is only a projecting rock like Gibraltar, and so we have established all round it a protective border, within which the Arab tribes are bound by engagements to accept our political ascendancy and to admit no other Not far from Aden lies the protected island of Socotra, a name in which one can barely recognize the old Greek Dioscorides, and from Aden eastward, right round Arabia by Oman to Muscat and the Persian Gulf, the whole coastline is under British protectorate, the police of these waters is done by British vessels, and the Arab chiefships along the seaboard defer to our arbitration in their disputes and acquiesce in our external supremacy

But these scattered protectorates in western Asia are merely isolated points of vantage or long strips of sea-shore, they depend entirely on our naval superiority in those waters, they are all subordinate

and supplementary to our main position in Asia, by which of course is meant India It is there that we can study with the greatest diversity of illustration, and on the largest scale, the curious political situations presented by the system of maintaining a double line of frontiers, the inner line marking the limits of British territory, the outer line marking the extent of the foreign territory that we undertake to protect, to the exclusion, at any rate, of foreign aggression

The long maritime frontiers of India furnish a kind of analogy between the principle upon which a sea shore is defended and the system of protectorates as applied to the defence of a land frontier In both cases the main object is to keep clear an open space beyond and in front of the actual borderline We do this for the land frontier by a belt of protected land which we throw forward in front of a weak border, and our assertion of exclusive jurisdiction over the belt of waters immediately surrounding our sea coasts is founded upon the same principle We English are accustomed to consider ourselves secure under the guardianship of the sea[1], although in fact the safety comes not from the broad girdle of blue water but from the strength and skill of the English navy that rides upon it And for a nation that has not learnt the noble art of seamanship, no frontier is more exposed to attack, or harder to defend, than the sea shore

The principle of defence, therefore, for both land and sea frontiers, is to stave off an enemy's advance by interposing a protected zone If a stranger enters that zone he is at once challenged If he persists, it is a hostile demonstration

[1] 'And Ocean mid his uproar wild
Speaks safety to his island child' - *Coleridge*

It would thus be a mistake to suppose that our Asiatic land frontier is conterminous with our Asiatic possessions, with the limits of the territory which we administer, and which is within the range of our Acts of Parliament It is not, like our Canadian border, or the boundary between France and Germany, a mere geographical line over which an Englishman can step at once out of his own country into the jurisdiction of another sovereign State The frontier of our Asiatic dominion is the outmost political boundary projected, as one might say, beyond the administrative border, and it must be particularly observed that the outmost boundary is here specified, because British India—the territory under the government of India—has interior as well as exterior boundaries In such countries as France or Spain, and indeed in almost all modern kingdoms, the government exercises a level and consolidated rulership over a compact national estate, with a frontier surrounding it like a ring fence But our Indian Empire sweeps within the circle of its dominion a number of native States, which are enclosed and land locked in the midst of British territory We have seen that many of these States were built up out of the dilapidated provinces of the Moghul empire by revolted governors or military leaders, who began by pretending to rule as delegates or representatives of the emperor, and ended by openly assuming independence, as soon as the paralysis of central government permitted them to throw aside the pretext With the fall of the Moghul empire came the rise of the British dominion, and in the course of a century some of the imperial provinces were again absorbed by conquest or cession into British India, while others were left as self-governing States under our protectorate There is also an important

group of Rajput chiefships which have always been independent under the suzerainty of the paramount Power.

In all these States the rulers are debarred from making war and peace, but they make their own laws and levy their own taxes, and we treat their territory as foreign, although the dividing borderline can hardly be called a frontier, because most of these States are entirely surrounded and shut in by British India. Nevertheless, their history—and in fact the general history of the expansion of British dominion from the sea-shore to the Himalayas and far beyond—illustrates at every turn the bearing upon our frontier of this system of protectorates, and what is going on now is chiefly the continuation of what went on from the beginning It will be found that from the time when the English became a power on the mainland of India, that is, from their acquisition of Bengal in 1765, they have constantly adopted the policy of interposing a border of protected country between their actual possessions and the possessions of formidable neighbours whom they desire to keep at arm's length In the last century we supported and protected Oudh as a barrier against the Marathas, and early in this century we preserved the Rajput States in central India for the same reason The feudatory States on the Sutlej were originally maintained and strengthened by us, before we took the Punjab, as outworks and barricades against the formidable power of the Sikhs. The device has been likened to the invention of buffers, because a buffer is a mechanical contrivance for breaking or graduating the force of impact between two heavy bodies, and in the same way the political buffer checked the violence of political collisions, though it rarely prevented them altogether. It may even be

suspected that the system rather accelerated than retarded the rapid extension of the English frontier, because, whereas after each collision with our rivals we annexed fresh territory, so we constantly threw out our protective border beyond the actual line of annexation, and thus we have always made a double step forward, keeping the strategic or political boundary well in advance of the limit of our administrative occupation The lines of our earlier frontiers, now left far behind in the interior of India, may often be traced by the survival of some petty principalities, that escaped being swallowed up by a powerful neighbour because it was originally our policy to protect them

Upon this system of pushing forward protective outworks until we were ready to march beyond them, the British dominion advanced right across India But as soon as we had reached the geographical limits of India—the range of mountains which separate it from central Asia, and which form perhaps the strongest natural barriers in the world—one might have thought that the protectorates, which are artificial fortifications of our exposed border, would be no longer needed On the contrary, they have grown with the expansion and rounding off of our dominion, and the empire in its plenitude seems to find them more necessary than ever. We have run our administrative border up to the slopes of the hills that fringe the great Indian plains, but on the north-west we are not contented with the guardianship of a mountain wall We look over and beyond it to the Oxus, and we see Russia advancing across the central Asian steppes by a process very like our own She conquers and consolidates, she absorbs and annexes, up to an inner line, and beyond that line, in the direction of India, she maintains

a protected State The Oxus divides Bokhara from Afghanistan, the Russian from the English protectorate. Here is a rival and possible enemy far more formidable than any of those whom we have hitherto discerned on our political horizon, and consequently our protective border has taken a wider cast than ever. Two countries whose broad extent and physical conformations adapt them admirably to be strong natural outworks, Belûchistan and Afghanistan, lie beyond our western border, full of deserts and mountains, hard to traverse and easy to defend, inhabited by free and warlike races, to whom liberty is, as to ourselves, the noblest of possessions Both these countries we have brought within the range of our political ascendancy, and thus we have assumed a virtual protectorate over that vast tract of country that stretches from the confines of India to Persia and the Oxus River Taking as the central point of departure the Victoria Lake, whose shores are the high mountain cradle of the Oxus[1], the line separating Russian from English spheres of influence runs eastward to the Chinese frontier, and westward along the course of the river Turning southward from the Oxus to the Indian Ocean, the whole western boundary line which separates Afghanistan and Beluchistan from Russia and Persia has been marked out under our supervision, and secured by treaty or agreement It must not be supposed that this line is secured upon any formal international compact with the States inside it, although their rulers have agreed to the arrangement which it represents We have fixed this outer border by negotiations with the States beyond, with Russia and Persia, who have promised and are pledged to respect it.

[1] 'Oxus, forgetting the bright speed he had
In his high mountain cradle in Pamere --*Matthew Arnold*

Here, then, beyond the extreme north-west of India, we may survey the system of protectorates operating on a grand scale, and we may find the strongest illustration of the principle that the true frontier delineates not only the land we administer but the lands we protect. On that side we are not content with fencing ourselves round by a belt of free tribal lands or a row of petty chiefships, we have barricaded the roads leading from central Asia into India by two huge blocks of independent territory, Afghanistan and Beluchistan. Up to the end of the seventeenth century the kingdom of Persia and the Moghul empire of India were nominally conterminous, for Kabul and Kandahar were held by the Moghul. But in the great political convulsions of the eighteenth century the highland country interposed between Persia and India was rent away, and formed into the separate chiefships which we now uphold as our barriers, they are the boulders or isolated masses that remain to attest the latest period of territorial disruption. Now, as both Russia and England have been employing the same political tactics in their advance towards each other, throwing forward protectorates, and occupying points of vantage, it has long been certain that Afghanistan, which lies right between the two camps, must fall into one or another of these spheres of influence. If England did not protect Afghanistan that country would undoubtedly be brought under the wardship of Russia, which has already taken under strict tutelage Bokhara, just across the Oxus. For the Afghan mountains dominate the Indian plains and command the roads from the Oxus to the Indus, and a country of such natural strength, a weak and barbarous kingdom overhanging the frontiers of two powerful military States, must always

fall, by the law of political gravitation, on one side or the other.

It may perhaps be asked why this must be—why we do not adopt the European method of dealing with a country that is too weak to stand by itself—why we do not neutralize Afghanistan, as Belgium and Switzerland are neutralized, by a joint agreement to respect its integrity and independence The answer is, that neutralization has never been a practical method of statecraft in Asia An ill-governed Oriental kingdom left as neutral ground between two European Powers, neither of which could interfere with its internal affairs, would rapidly fall into intolerable disorder, and probably into dilapidation The native ruler would be distracted by the conflicting demands and admonitions of two formidable and jealous neighbours, he would listen alternately to one or the other, and would be constantly giving cause of offence to both, he would find himself between the upper and nether millstone, and his end would probably be as the end of Poland, which became a focus of intrigue and anarchy, and was finally broken up by partition

A very curious historic parallel might be drawn, if space allowed, by comparing the existing position of Afghanistan between the Anglo-Indian and the Russian empires with the position of Armenia between the Roman and the Parthian empires during the first two centuries of the Christian era The Armenian ruler held the mountainous country and the passes between Europe and Asia, his kingdom was the barrier between the territories of two great military States, it was an essential point in the frontier policy of Rome to maintain her influence over the ruler, and her protection over his country The Armenian chiefs leant alternately

toward Rome and toward Parthia, they tried to save their independence by maintaining the balance but whenever they allied themselves with Parthia they were attacked by Rome, precisely as the Afghan Amír was attacked by England in 1879, when he made a treaty with Russia. Armenia, like Afghanistan, owed all its importance, not to its intrinsic strength, for it was weak and barbarous, but to its geographical situation, and the history of its relations with Rome—of the setting up and pulling down of client kings, of the efforts of the Romans to maintain exclusive control over its government without occupying its territory—must remind one very forcibly of the English connexion with Afghanistan

That connexion, which is now closer than ever, represents the grand climacteric and the broadest development of the protectorate system, and its efficacy may before long be brought to a decisive test. The demarcation of the western Afghan frontier by a joint commission of Russians and English in 1886 is plain evidence that the spheres of Russian and English influence, which have been long approaching, have at last touched each other It will be recollected, as an example of the delicate handling required by modern political machinery, that the first contact very nearly produced a collision, and was felt in a vibration that reverberated through all the Cabinets of Europe A slight difference in regard to the laying down of the boundary across the slopes of the Hindu Kush brought on a skirmish between Afghans and Russians at Penjdeh in 1885, and filled all Europe with rumours of war between England and Russia Lord Dufferin, a diplomatist of great skill and invaluable experience was then Viceroy of India, and the affair was compromised,

but it showed to the English, as by a sudden flash, where lay their true frontier, and what kind of possibilities were involved by its demarcation. The fact that for a breadth of some hundred miles between the disputed boundary line and the border of India proper the territory is ruled by the Afghan Amír, went for nothing; our frontier is always commensurate with our responsibilities for protection.

Taking, therefore, this view of the operation of our system of protectorates, it is worth while to survey the immense sweep of the radius which describes the outer circumference of our Asiatic frontier. For those who may apprehend that it has been pushed too far and too fast, there is at any rate this reassuring condition, that it can hardly go further; after more than a century's continuous expansion it must now come to a standstill, because it has at last struck westward and eastward against hard ground; that is, it has met in both directions the solid resistance of another well-organized State. When this point is reached, the moving and fluctuating borderlines begin at once to fix and harden; the protectorates settle down into orderly dependencies, disputes fall under the cognizance of regular diplomacy, and questions of war or peace become the concern of civilized governments. The Indian empire and its allies or feudatories now virtually occupy the whole area of southern Asia that lies between Russia and China, on a line drawn from the Oxus in the north-west down to the Mekong river in the south-east. On the north-west, where the proximity of Russia inevitably suggests special precautions, the line of advance into India from central Asia is barricaded by protectorates, Beluchistan, Afghanistan, Kashmir, and the petty States beyond Kashmir up to the skirts of the Hindu Kush. Along

the main northern line of the Himalayas we have few protectorates because we have no need of them, we have there a triple chain of almost impassable mountains, backed by the high table-land of central Asia, and on the other side is the Mongolian desert. But it is only upon this section of our outer line—between Kashmir and Nepal—that we are satisfied even with the stupendous mountain barriers of the Himalayas. We should allow no interference from the north with Nepal—and further eastward the encroachment of the Tibetans upon the protected State of Sikhim produced a little war only two years ago As on our north-western frontier we are very sensitive to the vicinity of Russia, so on our border-line in the north-east of Burmah we begin to feel distinctly, beyond the mountains and untravelled highlands, the presence of that great organized State, the most ancient upon earth, which has so long dominated on that side of Asia—the Chinese empire Here, as toward the north west, we are filling up the vacant spaces on the map, we are enlarging our dominion and setting forward our landmarks And here, also, our method of political exploration and reconnaissance is the protectorate in advance of the administrative boundary Seven years ago we made a great and important stride eastward, we were compelled to annex Burmah, whose ruler not only showed symptoms of open hostility but was bargaining for the protectorate of France Here, again, the acquisition of that kingdom carried us far beyond its limits, for at once the double line began to form, and our real frontier eastward has been thrown forward up to the Mekong river, enclosing a line of semi-independent chieftainships, which serve as buffers between Burmah proper and China We are at this moment engaged in

framing our relations with these chieftainships, and in extending our influence over the border tribes; we are, in fact, planning out and consolidating the intermediate zone, which, as has been said, is invariably left between the two lines, the inner limit of actual jurisdiction, and the outer political line of protection and defence.

And thus, on the east as on the west, we are slowly drawing into contact with rival Powers of equal political magnitude, our extreme boundary line reaches up to China and Siam, and at one point the political outposts of English exploration from Burmah, and of French pioneers from Tonkin, are almost within hail When all these boundaries are finally determined and ratified by the conventions of civilized diplomacy, the ground-plan of the future political settlement of Asia will have been laid out, and it is hardly too much to say that the whole of the Asiatic continent, outside the Chinese empire, may eventually be either in the possession or under the protectorate of some European State

It has been thought possible that this brief account of the manner in which our Indian empire has spread and been shaped out might be made interesting, because no process of the kind is now observable in western Europe, although the same principles, with the same practical result, are plainly discernible in the gradual growth of the Roman empire, and especially in the formation of that empire's political and military frontier Our European continent has been long ago parcelled out into compact nationalities which afford no room for the system of intermediate protectorates so that here the political and administrative frontiers always coincide And where, as in the case of Belgium or Switzerland,

a small country holds an important position on the political chessboard because it covers the vulnerable frontier of powerful neighbouring States, such a country is kept clear of intruders, not by a protectorate, but by neutralization

With regard to the future of our Asiatic protectorates, one thing seems to be abundantly clear, that the system of protectorates—the practice of throwing out a line of frontier round a wide tract of unsettled country in order to exclude rivals—this system, which was mainly invented in modern times by England for the building up of her Asiatic empire, is no longer our monopoly So long as the English, like their predecessors the Romans had the Asiatic world before them, where to choose—had come into contact with no other substantial rivals—the expansion of our dominion went on as steadily and easily as the extension in Asia of the Roman empire, which was pushed forward rapidly eastward until it met the Parthians, by whom it was fiercely resisted and finally driven back Our great naval superiority enabled us to beat off rivals in the distant seas, and on land we had only ill organized native States to deal with But in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and particularly during the last twenty years of unbroken peace in western Europe, there has sprung up a keen competition for territory and trade in Asia and in Africa, which has led to the wholesale imitation of the English system of protectorates, either direct or through chartered companies

Under the pressure and competition of France, Italy, Germany, and Russia protectorates are rapidly multiplying in all the outlying quarters of the old world—over Tunis, Egypt, Abyssinia, Zanzibar, and

countless tribes and chiefships in the interior of the African continent; and in Asia over Cochin China, the Annamite kingdom, Tonkin, and various half-explored borderlands

What is the chief and manifest consequence of this renewed approximation of the European powers in Asia? The effect has been to demonstrate more clearly than ever the revival of an intimate connexion between European and Asiatic affairs The points of contact are multiplying with the different points of view, with the recurrence of international apprehensions and rivalries The political and commercial interests begin again to act and react upon each other, the expansion of Europe presses upon Asia by land and sea, from the Mediterranean to the Caspian Sea, from the Persian Gulf to the seaboard of China, and the antique kingdoms and societies are sustaining with difficulty the inroad of European arms and enterprise The old conquering races of Asia, the Turkish dynasties at Stamboul and Tehran, the Usbeg of Bokhara, the Afghan of Kabul, the rulers of Annam and Siam, are recognizing in different forms and degrees the predominant influence of the Western nations And since upon this vast stage of action England still plays the leading part, and holds India as the central position, it is manifest that the isolation of India from the winds and currents of European politics must soon cease altogether and finally She is drifting rapidly within the recognized sphere of European diplomacy; the enlargement of her borders has become a matter of European concern, and henceforward her external policy and her military establishment must be necessarily regulated upon European rather than upon Asiatic considerations. In the place of the jealousies

of commercial companies, instead of desultory wars between rival settlements or against native princes, we have the greatest military powers of the world—Russia, France and England—feeling their way towards each other across wide deserts, difficult mountain ranges, and the debateable lands that skirt the Oxus in the north or the Mekong river on the far south east of our dominion To those, indeed, who demand permanency for territorial borders in Asia it may have been instructive to follow, throughout the events and transactions rapidly sketched in the foregoing pages, the adventures of successive Anglo-Indian governments in search of a stable and scientifically defensible land frontier We have usually begun by projecting a political border-line, by interposing, that is, some protected State between our real territories and the power beyond them, whose approach seemed to threaten our security But the result of this manœuvre has been too often to accelerate our own extension, because we have found ourselves eventually forced to advance up to any line that our rivals could not be permitted to overstep Nor can anything illustrate more signally the radical and inherent mutability, the accidental and elastic character, of all territorial and political settlements in Asia, than the fact that at this moment our statesmen are still in quest of that promised border-land whose margin seems to fade for ever as we follow it.

Conclusion.

The object of this short and inadequate survey of the steps by which the English have mounted to ascendancy in India has been to explain the combination of deter-

mining causes and events, in Europe as well as in Asia, that have placed England in possession of her Asiatic dominion The explanation is, in the present writer's opinion, not difficult, it can be elicited from an attentive comparative study of the course of history in Asia and Europe during the last three centuries The dominant fact as regards England may be said to be this—that as our island has been preserved by the surrounding sea from the invasions, foreign wars, and revolutions that have interrupted the commercial and colonial enterprises of the continental nations, we have been able to develop a vast mercantile system and to maintain a preponderance of naval power Yet although we can trace backward the sequence of events and influences, their result is none the less singular One remarkable characteristic of the history of the British dominion in Asia is that it affords an entire and connected view of the germination, growth, and expansion of a first-class territorial sovereignty The ancient world has left us an unbroken record of the life of the Roman State, from its birth to its full strength and stature, but the phenomenon of an empire's complete evolution is most rare in modern times, and it may be said that India is the only example now existing The Spanish dominion in America grew to vast dimensions out of the conquest of Hispaniola by Columbus, but this century has witnessed its disintegration, until at the present day Spain retains only a fragment of her former possessions. The situation of our Indian empire is thus in many respects unique, the annals of modern sovereignties show no parallel, and people still ask whether good or ill will come of it When Sir James Mackintosh remarked that England lost a great dominion in North America in 1783 and had won

another in India by 1865, he added that it was still uncertain whether the former was any real loss, or the latter any permanent gain. Mr. Spencer Walpole, a much later authority upon the history of England, inclines towards the view that in the end nothing will have been gained. 'Centuries hence,' he writes, 'some philosophic historian . . . will relate the history of the British in India as a romantic episode which has had no appreciable effect upon the progress of the human family[1].' Upon this it may be observed that, whatever may be the eventual advantage to England from her possession of India (for of the immediate advantage there can be little doubt), it seems already plain that the effect upon the general progress of the human family must be very great That one of the foremost nations of western Europe—foremost as harbinger of light and liberty—should have established a vast empire in Asia, is an accomplished fact which must necessarily give an enormous impulse and a totally new direction to the civilization of that continent It will be remembered that since the Roman empire began to decline civilization has not been spreading eastward; on the contrary, in Asia it has distinctly receded; it was driven out and so fundamentally uprooted by the Turkish Sultans that the long dominion of Rome in Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor has left very little beyond names and ruins On the other hand, the exceedingly slow advance of new ideas and social changes among the Oriental races proves the strength of resistance possessed by barbarism entrenched behind the unchanging conditions of Asiatic existence. The only important ground in Asia recovered for cen-

[1] *History of England*, vol v p 433.

turies by civilization has been won in India by the English.

But although civilization has hitherto gone forward very slowly in Asia, the spread of European power is now clearing the ground for rapid movement upon a very extensive line of advance Notwithstanding all risks and obstacles, the process of sweeping wide territories within new border lines, under the form of protecting them, for reasons political, strategical, and commercial, is in constant use, the English, in particular, make almost annual additions to the ethnology of their empire Undoubtedly an increasing border of territorial responsibilities must weigh on the minds of reflective men in all times and countries St. Augustine, looking out from his City of God over the still vast domain of Rome, debates the question whether it is fitting for good men to rejoice in the expansion of empires, even when the victors are more civilized than the vanquished, and the wars just and unprovoked[1] His conclusion is that to carry on war and extend rulership over subdued nations seems to bad men felicity, but to good men a necessity. It is doubtful whether Englishmen can adopt a better conclusion Continual expansion seems to have become part of our national habits and modes of growth For good or for ill, England has become what she is in the world by the result of adventurous pioneering, by seeking her fortunes in the outlying regions of the earth, by taking a vigorous part in the unending struggle out of which the settlement of the political world is evolved, as the material world is shaped out of the jarring forces of Nature. It is this incessant opening of new markets, exploration of further

[1] *De Civitate Dei*, Lib iv 15, 'An congruat bonis latius velle regnare

countries, organizing of fresh enterprises, the alternate contest with and pacification of rude tribes and unstable rulers, the necessity of guarding our possessions and staving off our rivals, that has caused and is still causing the steady enlargement of our borders.

Against an advance of this strength and magnitude the Asiatic nations have at present little power of resistance. The forces which broke up in earlier times the higher political organizations, which thrust back the higher religion, no longer exist, neither the fighting power of Asia, nor her fanatic enthusiasm, is now in the least formidable to Europe Not only is it certain that Asia lies at the mercy of the military power and resources of Europe, but in all the departments of thought and action she is still far inferior In these circumstances European progress is never likely to suffer another great repulse at the hands of Oriental reaction, and the English dominion, once firmly planted in Asia, is not likely to be shaken unless it is supplanted by a stronger European rival Henceforward the struggle will be, not between the Eastern and Western races, but between the great commercial and conquering nations of the West for predominance in Asia.[1] From this contest England has now little to fear, and in the meantime we have undertaken the intellectual emancipation of the Indian people, we are changing the habits of thought, the religious ideas, the moral level of the whole country No one can as yet venture upon any prognostic of the course which the subtle and searching mind of India will mark out for itself amid the cross-currents of Eastern and Western influences. But we may be sure that diffusion of knowledge and changes of material environment are acting steadily on mental habits, and that future historians will have a second

[1] This was written in 1894 The war between Russia and Japan has since altered materially the political situation and prospect in Asia.

remarkable illustration of the force with which a powerful and highly organized civilization can mould the character and shape the destinies of many millions of people[1]. And whatever may be the ultimate destiny of our Indian empire, we shall have conferred upon the Indians great and permanent benefits, and shall have left a good name for ourselves in history.

[1] 'I confess that my own imagination is most powerfully excited by the visible connexion between moral influence and material authority which is presented, to an extent never realized before or since, by the phenomenon of the Roman empire'—Merivale's *History of the Romans under the Empire*, vol. vii, Preface

---

It should be understood that this chapter was written before the end of the nineteenth century. Since the twentieth century began the state and tendencies of political affairs have undergone changes that have materially affected the general political situation in Asia, and particularly the foreign relations of India. The first section of Chapter XIX contains in outline an account of External Indian politics up to 1907; but since that chapter was published the conclusion of a Convention between Great Britain and Russia for the amicable settlement of Asiatic questions has considerably modified our position in regard to the frontiers of Afghanistan and also to the affairs of Persia. (A. C. L.)

CHAPTER XIX

INDIA UNDER THE CROWN (1858–1907)

SECTION I *External Politics*

In the foregoing chapters an attempt has been made to sketch in outline the gradual expansion of our territorial possessions in India, from the time when the rapid disintegration of the Moghul empire had left the whole country in political confusion, up to the complete establishment over it of the British dominion. During about one hundred years, from the middle of the eighteenth century, the English had been occupied in subduing rivals for power, in pacifying and reuniting the scattered provinces under our sovereignty. Whatever may be, in the western world, the proper division between ancient and modern history, it is safe to affirm that the dividing line between ancient and modern India is marked everywhere by the date at which each province or kingdom fell under British dominion But if it were necessary to draw a single line for India as a whole, the epoch that might be taken would be the assumption by Queen Victoria of the direct government of India under the Crown, in 1858. The vibration caused by the shock of the mutiny of the Bengal sepoys had not entirely ceased before 1860, but the heat of that violent conflagration fused all the elements of further disaffection and welded together the different parts of the empire into compact unity. Its

extinction terminated the long series of wars within India, and has been followed by fifty years of internal tranquillity

The Queen's Proclamation, announcing that the administration of India had passed from the East India Company to the Crown, confirmed all treaties and engagements made with the native princes, strictly prohibited interference with the religious beliefs of Her Majesty's Indian subjects, and desired that, so far as might be, all her subjects should be freely and impartially admitted to offices in her service Under such auspices the work of pacification and reform went on rapidly. Oudh, annexed in 1856, quieted down after two years of agitation, the great landholders were disarmed and conciliated by a favourable revenue settlement In the Punjab, where the Sikhs in large numbers had taken service in the British army and had fought with great spirit against the mutineers, Sir John Lawrence's energetic and sagacious administration had reconciled all classes to the new rulership The last titular representative of the old dynasty had scarcely disappeared from his palace at Delhi when a new monarchy was inaugurated, and the political reconstruction of the fragments of the Moghul empire was consolidated by a series of edicts and statutes For British India, the territory under our immediate government, the narrative of this period is comparatively uneventful—it records internal affairs and administrative progress But some account of external affairs must be given, first, in regard to the native chiefships whose lands, though not British territory, are enclosed within British India, and secondly, in regard to events and transactions, some of them of great importance, in the adjacent countries outside the external limits of our territorial jurisdiction

The policy, inaugurated by Lord Wellesley's subsidiary treaties, and continued by his successors, of bringing all the native States of India into subordinate relation with the British sovereignty, has already been briefly described. Under this system the supreme government has undertaken their protection and defence, arbitrates in any disputes among them, determines all claims to succeed to the rulership, maintains the chief's legitimate authority against revolt, and interferes with their internal affairs in cases of serious abuse of power or grave disorder. In 1860 Lord Canning conveyed to all these chiefs the assurance of the Queen's desire that their rulership should be perpetuated, and that, accordingly, adoption of successors made in accordance with the law and custom of their families would be recognized and confirmed The effect of this declaration was to regulate and define the succession upon a fixed principle of public policy, and above all to convince the ruling chiefs that in future no annexation, upon default of heirs, of their territories was to be feared

The area occupied, in the aggregate, by these States is at present about 650,000 square miles, with a population of some 66 millions They vary in size from Hyderabad, with a population of 11¼ millions, to petty chiefships containing less than 1000 inhabitants, they represent for the most part, as has been said, the territorial possessions or estates acquired by force and the fortune of war after the dilapidation of the Moghul empire, or the hereditary possessions of chiefs who survived that period of general confusion, and were preserved by the establishment of British supremacy.

The internal tranquillity of these chiefships, from 1860 up to the present time, has left few events

worthy of record. The British government [illegible] been obliged to interpose occasionally to [illegible] serious or criminal misconduct of individual [illegible] to determine authoritatively on the conflicting [illegible] to succession. The presence, at the capitals of the larger protected States, of subsidiary British troops is not only a guarantee of a ruler's rights, but also of his duties toward his subjects. Where succession to the chiefship has been disputed or doubtful, the British government has been frequently required to arbitrate between conflicting claims, occasionally to put down revolt, and in rare instances to punish acts of excessive or criminal misconduct committed by a chief or his ministers In illustration of the use made of this prerogative of interposition, two cases of unusual gravity may be noticed. In 1876 the Gaekwar of Baroda, who had been tried before a Commission for complicity in an attempt against the life of the British Resident, and who was convicted of gross maladministration, was formally deposed and removed to a place of detention. And in 1891, the Maharajah of Manipur, a small State on the eastern frontier of Bengal, took refuge in British India from a military revolt headed by his brothers. When the Chief Commissioner of Assam proceeded to make an inquiry into the affair, and to take measures for suppressing the disorder, he was enticed to a conference and treacherously murdered, with some of his officers, within the town of Manipur. A British force was despatched, which occupied the State for a time, until those concerned in the assassination had been punished The Maharajah had abdicated; and since his incapacity was proved beyond doubt, he was replaced by another representative of the reigning family.

An important addition has been made to the list of

[illegible] self-governing principalities by the revival of the State of Mysore, in southern India. In a previous chapter[1] some brief reference has been made to its previous history. The territory had been forcibly seized by Hydar Ali, and reconquered from Tippu Sultan by Lord Mornington[2], when part of it was restored to the old Hindu dynasty. But in 1831 the Indian government had been obliged to assume the administration, and retained it for fifty years In 1881, however, the State was reconstituted under the rule of the descendant of the ancient Hindu family from whom it had been taken nearly a century earlier, under conditions that provided for the acknowledgement of the British sovereignty, and for the welfare of the Mysore people. These conditions have been faithfully observed, and this just and politic action of the British government was appreciated by all the native chiefs throughout India as a confirmation of the declared intention to uphold their territorial independence

But while our relations with the feudatory States lying inside the external frontiers of India have been successfully maintained and strengthened, the course of affairs beyond those frontiers has been complicated by important events and their consequences Our annexation of the Punjab in 1849 had extended the dominion up to the skirts of the Afghan mountains, and had thereby brought our border into immediate contact with the highlands inhabited by warlike tribes, who had been accustomed for ages to make plundering raids upon the plains below. For the protection of our own districts, and for the punishment of intolerable brigandage, many expeditions into these highlands had been made, but with little or no permanent effect upon intractable barbarians. In 1863 it

[1] p. 240. [2] Afterwards Lord Wellesley.

became necessary to despatch a strong force into the hills overhanging the Peshawar valley against a settlement of fanatic Mohammedans who had been keeping the whole border-side in alarm by their plundering incursions, which the adjoining tribes were encouraged by their example to join At the Umbeyla Pass the British commander, finding himself confronted by a combination of all the neighbouring clans, was obliged to take up a defensive position, where he was fiercely assailed, and the force was for a short time in considerable jeopardy The predicament was serious, for a reverse might have been followed by a general rising of the tribes to break in over the frontier into British territory Some hard fighting ensued, until reinforcements came up, when, after the enemy had suffered severe loss, their leaders submitted to terms, the stronghold of the fanatics was demolished, and their gathering effectively dispersed This expedition, known as the Umbeyla campaign was one of the most hazardous and difficult of the forays and petty wars provoked by the tribes on our north western frontier, and the brief notice of it that has been here given may serve to illustrate the state of unrest and insecurity that has ensued whenever the British government has resolved to set bounds to its territorial expansion, to stop short, draw a line, and abstain from all interference with the affairs of the country beyond it Just as, in many parts of Asia, cultivation ceases abruptly at the farthest point reached by artificial irrigation in a desert tract, so primitive barbarism may exist just outside the edge of settled civilization, and the situation on the north-west frontier of India exhibits this sharp contrast of social and political conditions It would be a costly and difficult operation to extend administrative control

over this tribal zone, yet no other effective remedy for chronic disorder has hitherto been discovered, and the problem still awaits solution.

The war with Bhotan, in 1864, was forced upon the British government by similar causes and circumstances. Bhotan is a small State within the exterior ranges of the Himalayan mountains, lying east of Nepal, inhabited by a poor and ignorant people, accustomed to make predatory incursions into the province of Bengal In one of these raids some British subjects had been carried off into captivity by the Bhotias, and a mission had been despatched to the capital of the State with instructions to demand their release, but the request was contemptuously rejected, and the envoy was treated with gross insolence and threats of personal violence It became necessary to send an armed force into the country to exact reparation and to rescue the captives The troops, at first unskilfully handled in a region of hills and jungles, suffered a reverse which compelled them to retreat in some confusion, but the Bhotias anticipated a fresh advance in greater strength by submitting to terms which imposed upon them the penalty of ceding a strip of land along the base of the Himalayas, and they have since given no further provocation As Bhotan is under a ruler with some general authority recognized over a definite area, it was easier to effect some durable settlement with him than in the case of the ungovernable tribes in the North-west

Beluchistan, the country of the Beluch clans, lies along the western border of the Punjab and Sindh, extending down to the Arabian Sea. it is under the nominal authority or hegemony of a chief, whose head quarters are at Kelát, but his power was insufficient to restrain the turbulent leaders of the rival clans, who

were in constant rebellion against him, and the British border was continually troubled by their brigandage. In 1876, when Lord Lytton was Viceroy, Major Sandeman was deputed to mediate between the Khan and the chiefs, and to arrange for the freedom of trade routes and the general pacification of the border. He succeeded in negotiating a treaty by which the Khan acknowledged the influence and paramount overlordship of the British government in Beluchistan, in exchange for protection and support. The subordinate chiefs willingly accepted a settlement that put an end to incessant civil war, faction fighting, and misrule; and from that time the country has rapidly quieted down, until at the present moment the authority of the British representative is virtually exercised in Beluchistan up to the confines of Persia on the west, and the administration is conducted under his direction and guidance The passes leading up from India were opened and guarded, and a garrison of native troops was posted at Quetta, not far from the frontier that divides the Beluch territory from southern Afghanistan, on the road toward Kandahar The importance of this advanced military position, and of opening the communication in its rear through the Bolan Pass into India, was almost immediately demonstrated by subsequent events

It is impossible, within the limits of this chapter, to recount in detail the incidents and transactions that preceded and led up to the Afghan war of 1878-81. They were intimately connected with the larger spheres of war and diplomacy in Europe, and with the attitude of Russia in Central Asia.

When British India had expanded to its geographical

[illegible], from the sea-shore to the mountains, it might have been expected that our record of warfare in Asia was closing. Our command of the sea was unchallenged; and landward no country has stronger natural fortifications. But in the history of Asia during the latter half of the nineteenth century, the dominant element has been the increasing spread of European ascendancy, creating a general sense of political instability. For all the kingdoms of Asia felt the growing pressure of formidable neighbours, while the European powers were striving to hold each other at arm's length, and watching with jealous apprehension the gradual approximation of their respective frontiers. On the Asiatic continent the British dominion seemed at last to have reached its appointed limits at the base of the Afghan mountains, but Russia's advance through Central Asia was acquiring increased momentum in proportion to the mass of her conquests, and she was rapidly increasing her dominion For manifest reasons of policy and strategy the English, who desire to keep other European powers at a distance, insist on reserving a preponderating influence in the countries marching with their own territory, and allow no foreign interference with them Towards the end of the nineteenth century, therefore, the British government was watching, with redoubled attention, the approach of Russia in the direction of the Oxus river and the north-western provinces of the Afghan kingdom

By the subjugation of Khiva the Russian outposts had been brought much nearer to the Afghan frontier, and the attempt of the English cabinet to check this movement by negotiations had elicited little more than vague assurances from St. Petersburg. In 1873, however, the Russian emperor declared Afghanistan to be completely

outside the sphere within which Russian influence might be exercised; and the boundary line of that kingdom had been partially defined by diplomatic agreement. The whole policy, therefore, of British statesmen at this time was directed upon the object of securing the independence and integrity of Afghanistan. And the record of Indian foreign affairs during the period with which we are now concerned exhibits a series of discussions and ineffectual negotiations, until out of the gathering cloud of misunderstandings and the pressure of events, an Afghan war was suddenly precipitated in 1878 When, in 1868, the Amir of Afghanistan, Sher Ali, had mastered the whole of this country after a long and fiercely contested war for succession to the throne, the situation of his State between two powerful European governments filled him with anxiety, and he turned to India for alliance and material support. In 1869 he paid a visit to Lord Mayo, then Viceroy, at Umballa, where he was received with much ceremony, with large presents of arms and money, and with many friendly assurances But the Amir desired a formal treaty and a fixed subsidy, which Lord Mayo was not authorized to grant, so that the conference ended without any settlement on the substantial basis of an alliance. In 1873, when negotiations were renewed, Lord Northbrook proposed to accord to Sher Ali a guarantee against foreign aggression, but sanction was refused by the ministry at home, and to this disappointment, with other grievances, may be ascribed the distrust and resentment which Sher Ali displayed in his subsequent dealings with the British government.

In 1876, however, the English ministry had become convinced that it was necessary to secure closer and more definite relations with the Amir, and Lord Lytton,

on his appointment to the Viceroyalty, took out with him to India instructions to carry out this policy. His first step was to propose sending a mission to Kabul, but this overture was so unfavourably received by the Amir that, after some abortive negotiations, it was abandoned, not without friction and estrangement on both sides. In 1877 came the war between Russia and Turkey, and in 1878, when the Russian army was before Constantinople, the British government prepared for armed intervention by sending Indian troops to Malta. The Russians replied by a counter-move, they pushed forward a detachment from their army in Central Asia towards the Afghan frontier, and a Russian envoy arrived at Kabul, who proceeded to draw up a treaty of alliance with the Amir The Viceroy of India retaliated by a demand for the immediate admission of a British envoy at Kabul, but Sir Neville Chamberlain's mission was forcibly turned back at the Afghan outposts, whereupon an ultimatum, insisting upon the reception of a British envoy, and requiring a reply by a fixed date, was despatched to the Amir By that date no reply came, so war was declared in November 1878, and three columns of troops entered Afghanistan from different points The column which advanced from the south by Quetta occupied Kandahar almost without opposition, the two northern columns threatened Kabul from Kuram and Jelalabad, and when General Roberts had dispersed the Afghan troops at the Peiwar Kotal, the Amir, leaving Kabul, took refuge in his upper provinces near the Oxus, whence he appealed for succour to the Russian authorities in Transcaspia But the interest of Russia in his affairs had ceased with the signature of the Berlin treaty, he was advised to make peace with the British government, and early in 1879 he died in

great distress. His son, Yakub Khan, offered to negotiate for the cessation of hostilities, conditionally upon his own recognition, with British support, as successor to the Amirship. After considerable discussion, the treaty of Gandamak was concluded with him, whereby he ceded certain outlying tracts that would facilitate our command of the routes leading into Afghanistan, and agreed to receive a British envoy at Kabul. To this post Sir Louis Cavagnari was deputed in July 1879.

But the whole country had been thrown into confusion by the war, and the death of the Amir Sher Ali had left it without a ruler. Yakub Khan had neither the experience nor the strength of character required for the mastery of such a situation, his troops were unpaid and mutinous, and his influence was slight over a fierce, indomitable people, whose inveterate hatred of foreigners was intensified by the presence of a British officer at Kabul The whole fabric of our arrangements with Afghanistan, as it had been built up on the treaty of Gandamak, depended on the envoy's personal safety Within three months his assassination brought it down with a terrible crash, and thus, while during the first period of the war we had been engaged in fighting the Amir Sher Ali, in the second we found ourselves involved in the much more arduous task of fighting the Afghan people. Immediately upon receipt of the news that Cavagnari, with all his escort, had been murdered, the war was renewed. Kabul was captured by a rapid and daring march of Sir Frederick Roberts upon the capital, Kandahar, which Sir Donald Stewart had just evacuated, was reoccupied; but although we managed to retain a firm military hold on these two important points, the Indian government was now confronted by a most awkward dilemma.

The attempt to subdue and pacify the whole country was beyond our power, and had never been contemplated by our policy, while, if we withdrew our garrisons, Afghanistan would have been left to masterless anarchy, and the war would have been waged to no purpose. The armed tribes, believing that the subjugation of Afghanistan was intended, broke out into insurrection around Kabul, and in December 1879, they combined for a resolute assault upon the British entrenchments outside the city Their defeat, after some very sharp fighting, quieted the surrounding districts for the time, and communications with India were reopened; but the manifest interest of the British government was to make over Afghanistan to some capable and not unfriendly ruler, and, indeed, the war had been undertaken with this sole object

From this dilemma we were extricated by the appearance in the northern province of Abdurrahman, the nephew of the Amir Sher Ali's predecessor, who had been driven out of the country when Sher Ali won his throne in the civil war for succession and had been living under Russian protection beyond the Oxus river The Viceroy of India (Lord Lytton) made amicable overtures to him, with assurances that his accession to the vacant rulership would not be opposed, and he received an invitation to the British head quarters at Kabul, for the purpose of discussing terms upon which he might be recognized as Amir, and the rulership of the country might be made over to him In June 1880, Lord Lytton resigned his Governor Generalship of India to Lord Ripon, by whom this arrangement was, not without difficulty, concluded Abdurrahman's accession was proclaimed in the British camp at Kabul, he was strengthened by grants of arms and money, and by

a formal promise of support against foreign aggression; and the British troops were just starting on their return to India, when news came that Ayub Khan, Sher Ali's younger son, had marched with an army from Herat upon Kandahar. In July he routed a British force at Maiwand, not far from Kandahar, and was beleaguering the garrison within the walls of that city. A strong expedition was immediately despatched from Kabul, under the command of Sir Frederick Roberts, who reached Kandahar by forced marches at the end of August, attacked and completely defeated Ayub Khan, relieved the garrison, and drew off his troops into India by the Bolan Pass Simultaneously the British army at Kabul had withdrawn from Afghanistan by the direct northern route, and in 1881 the evacuation of Kandahar left the Amir free to enforce his authority over the southern province. Abdurrahman, thus left to his own resources, drove Ayub Khan (who had returned) out of the country, and rapidly extended his power everywhere, until in a few years all Afghanistan was, for the first time in its history, amalgamated into a strong independent kingdom under a ruler of singular ability and merciless severity. During the following years the frontiers of this kingdom were laid down. The demarcation of its north-western boundary, from the Oxus river to the confines of Persia, was undertaken by a joint commission of Russian and English officers; but a dispute over one section of the line caused a collision between Russian and Afghan troops at Panjdeh, which brought England and Russia to the verge of a rupture in 1885, at a moment when the Amir was a guest of the Viceroy (Lord Dufferin) in his camp in north India. When that peril had been averted, the whole north-west frontier

adjoining Russian possessions was settled by an international convention; and the next measure was to define the Afghan frontier on its eastern side, where a belt of tribal highlands is interposed between the Amir's territory and British India. An agreement with the Afghan ruler has placed the turbulent tribes of this debateable land under the political superintendence of the British officers on that frontier.

The general effect of all these measures has been of the highest importance to our dominion in India. During the nineteenth century Afghanistan has been a foreign kingdom which the English, who have no desire to possess, are nevertheless imperatively compelled to protect, and which must be retained at all risks and costs within the orbit of British influence, since its independence is essential to the security of any rule or dynasty in India. Under the Moghuls this country was a province of their empire, under the British system it is a protectorate, the Afghan mountains are still the necessary barrier against irruptions into the Indian plains. Since 1880, when the formal promise to defend Afghanistan from foreign aggression was given to the Amir, the condition of his kingdom has steadily improved, it is no longer distracted by chronic civil wars and intestine revolts, it has been comparatively quiet and prosperous for twenty-seven years; and the present reigning Amir succeeded to the throne, on his father's death, without opposition; whereas all previous successions had been contested, or had been followed by rebellions. This transformation of the internal condition of the country may be ascribed, primarily, to the aid and support received by its rulers from the British government, and secondly to the delimitation of the Afghan frontiers, which has been

ratified by a public convention between the two European powers. The latest convention, signed in 1907 between Great Britain and Russia, has still further modified and improved the situation on these frontiers. Under this agreement, so long as it remains in force, the integrity of the Amir's territory and the independence of his internal government are secured by international guarantee, and the long-standing jealousies, disputes, and apprehensions that have for nearly a century disturbed the relations of the two European empires in Asia, may be said to have been removed

In order to complete the narrative of events on the northern frontiers of India, it may be here mentioned that in 1896–7 the petty chiefships on the southern slopes of the Hindu Kush mountains beyond Kashmir were included within the range of the British protectorate. This extension of our political control was not accomplished without some resistance by the tribes of that wild and hitherto inaccessible region They beleaguered and brought into some peril a British garrison in Chitral, until it was relieved by an expedition that made a difficult and hazardous march to its assistance Our sphere of influence has thus been extended up to the borders of the Chinese empire in Kashgar, and its landmarks have been permanently set up in those remote highlands The general result of all these operations, military and diplomatic, has been to lay out along the northern and north western frontiers of India a broad zone of protected States, which separate China, Russia, and Persia from the territories under our direct administration

In the meantime, however, while we were engaged in clearing and strengthening the strategic position beyond northern India, on our south-east frontier new

and grave complications had arisen. Since 1853, when the lower provinces of Burmah had been conquered and annexed, the attitude of the Burmese rulers toward the British government had been resentful and vindictive. In 1885 the Burmese king persisted in rejecting reasonable demands made for reparation of injuries to British subjects, and what was much more serious, it was discovered that he was secretly negotiating a treaty with France, so framed as to give French interests a predominant influence in his country. When remonstrance and warning had proved entirely ineffectual, an ultimatum, backed by the assembling of an army on his frontier, was despatched to him by the Indian government The reply was by a proclamation in a tone of hostility, whereupon, in November 1885, the troops advanced on Mandalay The Burmese army made no serious resistance, the capital was occupied, the king was captured, and the annexation of Upper Burmah was announced by the Queen's government. After nearly two years of internal disorder, for the conquered provinces were infested by marauding bands and disbanded soldiery, the work of pacification was accomplished, and the civil administration organized. Beyond the north-eastern districts of Upper Burmah the petty chiefships in the wild tracts up to the Mekong river became our tributaries, and the tribes in the scarcely explored hills in the north have partially submitted to our control The ruler of Siam, a kingdom that lies east of Burmah, separating it from the French possessions in Cochin China, had become involved in disputes with the French authorities, and since the situation of Siam renders its independence of substantial concern to India, the British government interfered diplomatically in 1896, to prevent the kingdom's dis-

memberment, and to obtain recognition of the British protectorate over the Siamese provinces nearest to our own border.

This, the latest, expansion of British dominion by the incorporation of Upper Burmah has made a considerable addition to the weight of our political responsibilities. Between the populations of India and of the countries known as Indo-Chinese, there is little or no affinity. Here we have broken fresh ground in Asia, we have come into contact on our advanced position with strange races and languages: we are exploring a region hitherto almost unknown to Europeans, we have to demarcate the outlines and fill in the detail of our ever-widening territorial map. Our policy, on this side as on the Afghan border, is to maintain friendly relations with the Chinese officials, who are very sensitive to our proceedings, and to establish over the barbarous folk in the tracts intervening between the two empires a protectorate sufficient to reclaim them gradually from turbulence, to convert them from plundering borderers into border police, and to exclude foreign influence or encroachments

Except by the annexation of Burmah, the area under the direct and regular administration of the Indian government has undergone little change since 1858. On the other hand, the external frontier of the empire, if the line is drawn, as it must be, to include the outlying regions that have been brought within the sphere of British influence or superior control, has been very materially widened in the course of the last fifty years. This frontier is now conterminous with the Russian possessions in Central Asia on the north-west, it marches for several thousand miles with the empire of China; and on the south-east it touches the Asiatic colonies of

[illegible]. By a recent expedition to Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, we have emphasised our determination to permit no encroachment of another European power upon the vast tracts of mountains and deserts that stretch from the Himalayas northward to the confines of Mongolia. Our policy is to keep clear of intrusion all the approaches to India, and to hold in our hands the keys of all its gates. Upon this system we have been obliged to multiply and throw forward our military outposts, and accept a great augmentation of sundry and manifold political responsibilities. The outer frontier of the British dominion that our policy now requires us to defend, has an immense circumference Its south-eastern extremity rests on the Gulf of Siam, whence it sweeps round Tibet on the north, it touches the Hindu Kúsh range of mountains and the Oxus, on the north-west it covers Afghanistan and Beluchistan, until it terminates at its western extremity on the shores of the Arabian sea. The consequence of this expansion of our spheres of political influence far beyond the area of our actual dominion, is that the frontiers of the British empire are changing their character. The boundaries of India proper are naturally defined on three sides by an almost unbroken wall of mountains or by desert tracts and on the fourth side by the sea. But the political circumscription of our exterior frontier has now been formed by tracing artificial lines, settled by international agreements, across the slopes and valleys of the Central Asian highlands, and across desolate plains or rugged half-explored hill-tracts. These fixed lines of frontier represent the outworks of our strategical position; and from the north-west to the south-east they adjoin the dominions of two other great Asiatic empires, Russia and China. The political situation in Asia is now closely dependent

upon any entanglement of the network of international relations throughout the world; so that any serious strain or rupture would be felt not only in India, but in all the adjacent countries under European influence; nor is it too much to say that the destiny of the greater part of Asia depends on the balance of power and the adjustment of forces in Europe

SECTION II. *Internal Administration*

The history of British dominion in India has been written, up to this point in the narrative, with little or no reference to matters of interior administration It has described, in broad outline, the origin and expansion of British rule by territorial conquest and cessions, the gradual rise of its supremacy over all rival Indian powers, and the external policy adopted for the defence and security of our possessions But during the latter half of the nineteenth century great internal changes have supervened, the enlargement of territory has increased the number and diversity of the population; the moral and material condition of the people has made important advances It has, therefore, been thought expedient to complete this volume by adding some brief account of the progress of civil government, and of the reforming measures from time to time introduced, in the course of the period to which this section relates.

The sepoy-mutiny of 1857 was reactionary in its causes and revolutionary in its effects; it shook for a moment the empire's foundations but it cleared the area for reconstruction and improvement In a previous chapter it has been said that for the twenty years immediately preceding, from 1837 to 1857, there had

been only short intervals of peace between recurrent wars, and that British territory had been greatly extended by successive annexations. When, in 1849, the Punjab had been subdued and pacified after two hard-fought campaigns, and when Oudh, the last and largest kingdom in northern India, had been incorporated by Lord Dalhousie in 1856, it might have been plausibly anticipated that the rough war-time had ended, and that the whole country could settle down in tranquillity under our dominion

In reality we were only just turning the first leaf of a new chapter, which opens with the outbreak of a fierce civil war. The thunderstorm of revolt broke in upon these visions of repose, and on the prospects of unclouded calm, the native army, which for a hundred years had shared all our triumphs and reverses in war, rose against us, and was overpowered after a desperate struggle In Oudh the great landholders set up the standard of rebellion, and throughout the northern provinces British authority was for some time either swept away, or sustained only by the force of arms and the resolution of those who confronted a tremendous crisis with courageous energy Thus in 1860, when order had been at last restored, the older provinces were recovering from a dangerous insurrection, which had seriously disturbed the adjoining native States, while in the territories recently acquired the fabric of government had been merely provisional, suited to the immediate needs and emergencies of their recent occupation. With the complete pacification of the country came leisure for organization, for placing the executive authority of the various local governments on a definite footing, and substituting laws properly framed for unmethodical procedure and discretionary ordinances.

The moment was opportune for undertaking this work, as the constitution of the Indian government, after passing through various stages of transition, had now reached a condition that rendered comprehensive alterations urgently necessary, in order to adapt it to civilized uses and to the needs of a changing society. The administration of the Moghul empire had been to some degree systematic; and its scheme of distribution into districts and provinces, with the methods of assessing the local revenue, still survived in outline. But the native rulerships immediately preceding the British dominion had neither system nor stability, since the incessant warfare and scramble for territory during the eighteenth century had left even able chiefs without time or means for administrative settlement. Yet even the Moghul emperors, in the plenitude of their power, had never promulgated general civil or criminal laws backed by State sanction, in the European sense of these terms, nor had they at any time pretended to regulate authoritatively the customs and domestic relations of the people, being content to levy revenue and do rough justice according to the arbitrary will of the sovereign or of his deputies The multifarious groups that make up the population of India had lived under their personal institutions and rules of conduct, mainly religious; for it may be said that in Asia law and religion are almost universally regarded as two sides of the same subject Under the earlier regimen of the East India Company the practice had been to issue provincial Regulations of an old-fashioned type framed to suit the requirements and circumstances of sundry times and divers places, loosely drawn and intermixed with instructions and explanations, and further complicated by empirical decisions of the local courts.

Latterly some Acts, of importance and value, passed by the supreme legislature, were put in force throughout the older provinces. But the new territories, as they were annexed to the dominion, were placed by the Governor-General provisionally under his direct control by what was called the Non-Regulation system, reserving his power of extending discretionally the regular laws and procedure, with directions that their spirit rather than their letter should be followed, to be supplemented in doubtful cases by the guidance of equity and good conscience

When, therefore, after the final suppression of the mutiny and of the agitation that it had spread throughout the northern provinces, the permanent reconstitution of government became practicable and necessary, the task of the British authorities was to deduce order out of this confusion, and to lay the foundations of a new and uniform polity The country had been the scene of more rapid and abrupt transitions, political and economical, than had ever perhaps, been recorded in the history of nations For in India old and new forms of civilization had become intermixed, not only by the influx of European ideas upon an Asiatic society, but because it contained an immense population in different stages of material and intellectual progress. The English had originally taken over an empire in a state of political dilapidation, and they had now to complete its administration on a scientific plan, with a solicitous regard to the inveterate prejudices of many races and religions. Previously to the mutiny of 1857, this process of reformation had been going on slowly; but from that time forward it acquired great momentum. By an Act of Parliament passed in 1858, the supreme powers of control over Indian affairs, which

had been hitherto divided between the Court of Directors and the ministers of the Crown, were vested in a Secretary of State in Council; and all the naval and military forces of the East India Company were transferred to the imperial service Then, in 1861, the India Councils Act modified the constitution of the Governor-General's executive Council in India, and re-modelled the legislature by establishing a Council, presided over by the Governor General, to make laws for the whole of India, with subordinate legislative Councils at Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta. Another statute instituted High Courts of Judicature under royal charter, at these three capitals, and in 1860-1 the enactment of the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure assimilated throughout the country the general system of criminal law By these measures the executive and judicial administration was systematically rearranged; so that, when Lord Canning, the first Viceroy of India, left Calcutta in 1862, he made over to his successor a government very different in organization and character from that which had been transmitted to him, six years earlier, by Lord Dalhousie The royal supremacy, proclaimed in 1858, became the actual and visible sign of substantial incorporation into the British empire in all parts of the world, at a time when India had received large accretions of territory, while the sense of unity created by the Queen's assumption of direct government restored confidence, and gave a powerful impulse to the moral and material advancement of the Indian people

The administrative history of India during the next fifty years may be described as a development upon the lines that were laid down by these fundamental executive and legislative reforms. It records the

methodical prosecution of the work of adjusting the mechanism of a modern State to the circumstances and customs of a most heterogeneous population. On the one hand, personal laws, precepts of caste and creed, and prescriptive rights had to be respected On the other hand, the effect upon many of these rules and usages made by the introduction of a strong and systematic administration was to derange and modify them, because the needs and circumstances under which they had grown up were passing away In this manner the vague and elastic ordinances of primitive societies were naturally falling into disuse, with a tendency towards dissolution But the operation of the British courts of justice, which had been established in the older provinces, was to arrest this spontaneous decomposition To these tribunals every question of right, every dispute over matters of inheritance, property, and customary law generally, was necessarily referred, and the result was commonly to fix by the judicial decisions, and thus to stereotype, an order of things that was by its nature elastic, that had taken its shape from the rude exigencies of lawless times, and was becoming inconsistent with the new social and economical environment, with peace, with the growth of wealth security of property, and the spread of education The effect was to give inflexible precision and rigidity to loose undefined usages, for, while a self-regulating community can amend or abandon an inconvenient precept of caste or creed, in the hands of an English judge the rule becomes immutable, and the bonds are tightened But the conditions of life, for all classes of the population had been so profoundly affected by the advent of British dominion, that nothing but our own positive and inflexible law could have prevented a corresponding modification of

archaic ideas and institutions. It had thus [illegible] that while the general civil law of India [illegible] extent intricate and uncertain, varying from [illegible] province, with multifarious distinctions and [illegible] created by religious singularities and local [illegible], its complexity was further increased by the importation of an exotic legal procedure. Yet government by a clear and scientific body of laws, binding upon the authorities and appropriated to the circumstances of the people, is the only real security for the progress and prosperity of a country, so that it was essential to mould this mass of heterogeneous sections and rulings into some compact and intelligible shape. The problem was to simplify and generalize the civil law and procedure, and to enact large principles of equity and morality, with the least possible disturbance of the practices, prejudices, and organic institutions of Indian society.

Under the direction of Sir Henry Maine, a jurist whose insight into the forms and ideas of early civilizations admirably fitted him for the task, the solution of this problem was initiated When, in 1862, he assumed charge of the legislative department of the Indian government, the two great Acts codifying the Penal Law and Procedure had already been passed; but the subject of civil or domestic legislation was much more complicated. It is obvious, for example, that questions touching marriage and inheritance lie at the base of every society, being related to fundamental interests and affecting very delicate susceptibilities; so that any interposition by foreign legislators must be exercised with the utmost caution. In India the rules which preside over family life and the distribution of property are intermixed with and dependent upon [illegible]

[illegible] worships, and beliefs; their diversity and multiplicity preclude any attempt to comprehend them within a uniform Civil Code. The only practicable course, therefore, was to frame Acts embodying broad principles of jurisprudence, providing, so to speak, the lines upon which social evolution might be assisted. The precise scope and operation of these emancipating Acts cannot be here explained; though the Indian Succession Act may be taken as an illustration of the process. It codified the law relating to the effect of death or marriage upon successors to property, and to testamentary bequest, but it does not apply to Hindus, Mohammedans, or to others who are subject to their own personal laws; it provides a definite civil status for those classes of the population whom the novel rites and peculiar doctrines, which are continually disintegrating orthodox Hinduism, or the softening of manners and intellectual elevation, may have separated from their original sects or communities. Other Acts, such as that for the remarriage of converts to Christianity, embodied the principle that change of religion involved no loss of ordinary civil rights. The Acts dealing with Evidence and Contract reduced to concise and explicit form a mass of law that the courts had previously been obliged to extract from text-books, reports, and conflicting rulings, and the procedure of all courts of civil jurisdiction was determined by comprehensive enactments. In short, the aim and outcome of the legislation during this period was to simplify and summarize the administration of justice, and to promote by successive measures the general principle of civil and religious liberty, taking power to extend them as their expediency and moral superiority should be gradually recognized by the people, and slowly mould-

ing their habits to the conception of government by laws.

The policy of reform and consolidation pursued during this period in one great department of administration is of such importance, and to some extent of such general interest from the standpoint of comparative legislation, that some brief explanation of it may not be here out of place. In India, where the public income from land has always been the chief mainstay of the State's finances, and where the population in a very great majority subsist by agriculture, the just and skilful management of this source of revenue has always been of vital importance to the welfare of every government and of the people From the beginning of British rule the provincial authorities have been continually engaged in deciding questions of ownership and occupancy, in allocating the payments due to the treasury from every estate and sometimes from every field, in revising earlier systems of taxation, and in passing laws or framing executive rules to settle disputed proprietorship or to remedy agricultural distress The fact that from time immemorial the State has invariably shared in the surplus profits of agriculture has provided every strong government in India with a direct and very substantial motive for protecting the actual cultivator, the liability of the country to periodical drought adds weight to this primary interest and obligation. But many parts of India, when they first came under British sovereignty, had suffered from the passage of armies, from marauding bands, from the dispersion or impoverishment of the cultivators, and from all the calamities of war In the violent contests for possession of territory and revenue the lands had been forcibly seized, and the strife had been incessant be-

tween the old and the new proprietors. In the outlying districts, during intervals of confusion, neither rent nor revenue could be regularly levied, as an intermittent struggle between those who strove to exact too much and those who would pay nothing at all was maintained among tenants, landlords, and official tax-gatherers. In this manner, by the swaying to and fro of the conflict, by local accidents, and by the vicissitudes of political power, was produced that intricate variety of proprietary and cultivating tenures, with an arbitrary and fluctuating assessment of revenue, which the English found in the different provinces that fell at different times under their administration The precarious nature of proprietary and occupancy rights, bearing traces of ruinous exaction or lawless resistance, left room for every kind of theory as to the basis upon which the relations between landlord and tenant, and between both classes and the State, should be permanently or temporarily determined What meaning and what measure of legal recognition should be assigned to local usage and prescriptive claims, how far the law ought to interfere to modify the stringency of contracts imposed upon the tenantry, whether the State's demand should be raised or lowered, to what extent double ownership of land should be subjected to statutory definition, all such questions had to be investigated and decided upon considerations of equity and expediency It was necessary to mediate between the two interests of ownership and occupancy in agriculture, interests which are so sensitive to economical changes, that the most skilful attempts to distribute them formally, and to provide by legislation, however elastic, for all the incidents of the connexion, have hitherto failed to prevent severe recurrent strains upon it.

To follow the official controversies, and discussions over the points at issue, or to give even the outline of an intelligible account of the methods, legal and executive, by which they were determined in the various provinces, would be impracticable within the limits of this chapter. It must be sufficient to state that the determination of these questions in northern India, especially in the Punjab and Oudh, engaged for several years the attention of the government The subject holds a prominent place in the administrative history of this period, since the agrarian reforms and the fiscal regulations then settled, after long and accurate inquiries, have probably contributed more than any other measures to the confirmation and popularity of the British rule

Among the most potent instruments of civilization in India have been the railways Up to about 1850 the main roads were still unmetalled, and a few years later the first railways were just begun. Since that time, they have branched out over the whole country, disseminating everywhere the benefits of rapid intercourse and commercial interchange, and with great advantage to our strategical position The external trade of India has increased with the multiplication of outlets to the seaports, and the productive powers of the soil have been augmented over a large area by the extension of artificial irrigation. By the diversion of the flow of the great rivers into canals, many hundred miles in their aggregate length, and by the storage of water in numerous reservoirs, the largest irrigation system in the world has been constructed in India. The effect of these great productive works has been to augment and distribute the national wealth; they have perceptibly modified the aspect of the country, and the habits of the people.

The capital invested in these undertakings by the State has been, for the most part, obtained from loans, which were raised at low interest on the credit of the British government. The public debt of India to England has been sometimes represented as an intolerable burden, yet probably no incident of the connexion between the two countries has been of greater advantage to India than this expenditure of many millions on the development of its natural resources.[1]

In 1897, the assumption by Queen Victoria of the title of Empress of India, declared before a grand assemblage of chiefs and notables at Delhi, gave public form to the fact of sovereignty, and attested the recognition of supremacy

For India, therefore, the last fifty years have been pre-eminently an era of consolidation by laws and administrative reform. The British government may now be described as a highly organized machine, so powerful, and so complicated in its functions that scientific management and control of them is indispensable, and accordingly their superior direction has been hitherto retained in English hands Foreign dominion must necessarily be more or less autocratic for some time after it has been acquired; and since the rulers are usually compelled to rely for its maintenance at first upon the strength and fidelity of their own countrymen, the chiefs of their civil and military government have almost invariably been imported from abroad. The Moghul emperors appointed men of their own race

[1] The remittance of the interest annually due on this debt has been frequently described by the invidious misnomer of a 'tribute' exacted from India. Yet the annual 'tribute' paid to England by Australia, on the same account of interest on loans, is larger in proportion to the resources of the two countries.

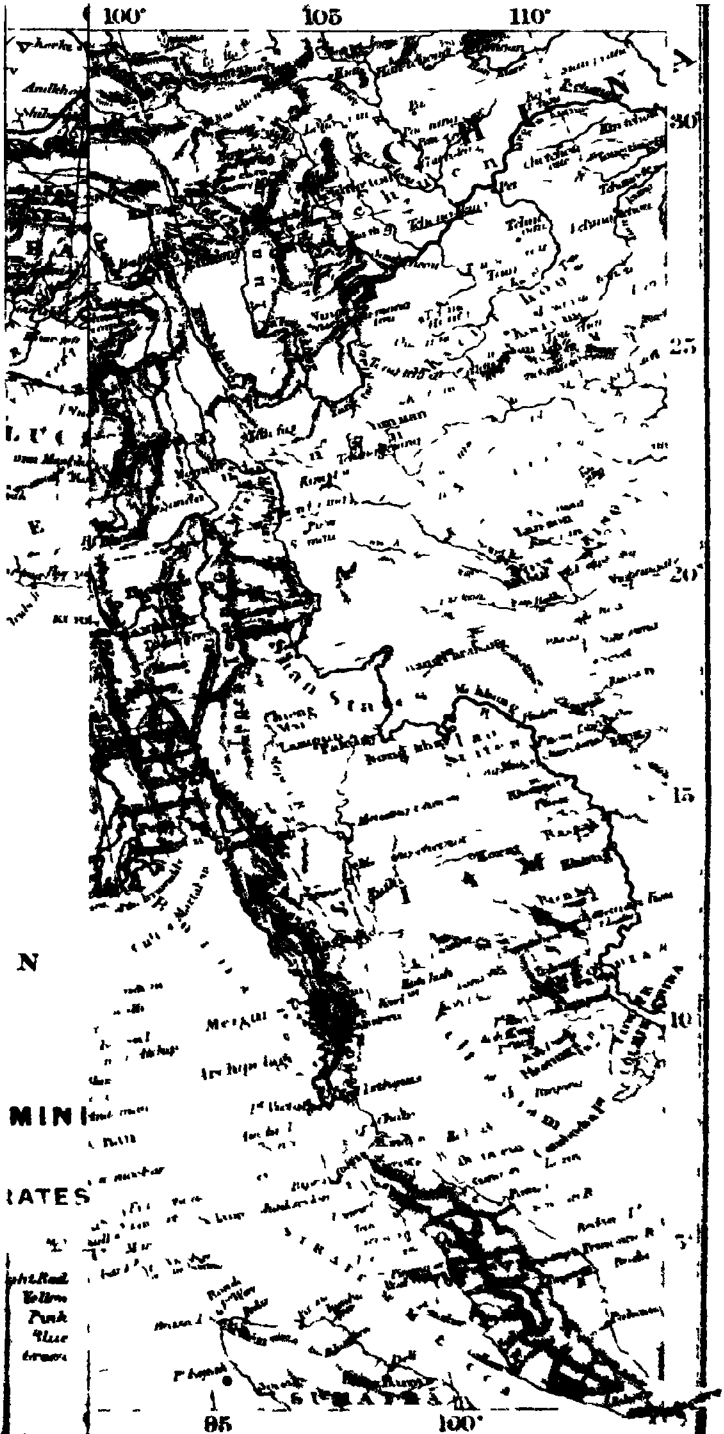
or creed to their military commands, and to most of their highest civil offices; the British nation has been forced, by similar conditions of political existence, to reserve the upper grades of their Indian administration for Englishmen But the Moghul government was essentially personal and absolute, and, in fact, no other form of rulership has ever been attempted in a purely Asiatic State The people have been used to concern themselves only with the question whether a despotism was strong or weak, tolerable or intolerable; for the expedient of improving a government by altering its form has not yet been discovered in Asia, the only remedy, if things went outrageously wrong, has been to change the person The English rule, therefore, succeeded to an empire of this character, with a centralized authority presiding over different provinces recently conjoined, and a population in promiscuous ethnical variety But the inhabitants of India have thereby become fellow-citizens with a European nation that has for centuries been working out popular institutions in a totally different atmosphere, in an island sheltered from invasion, in circumstances peculiarly favourable to the evolution of self government, among a homogeneous people knit together by common interests and national sentiment Whereas India has for ages been plagued with invasions, its vast territory has been incessantly split up and parcelled out among foreign conquerors and contending dynasties, the population is internally subdivided to a degree unparalleled elsewhere, even in Asia, by the inveterate antagonism of different races and religions It may be affirmed that the moral and material civilization of the Indian people has made more progress in the last fifty years than during all the preceding centuries of their history.

Yet it has inevitably come to pass that the differences of wealth and learning, frequent intercourse with Europe, and the saturation of the educated classes with western ideas and political axioms, have stimulated the desire for a larger share in the government of their country among the leaders of native public opinion. An efficient administration no longer satisfies them, on the contrary, it has created ulterior hopes and aspirations We began with great organic reforms, with improving the police and the prisons, with codes of law, a hierarchy of courts of justice, a trained civil service, and all the apparatus of a modern executive Latterly we have undertaken the gradual introduction of representative institutions, legislative councils in all the important provinces, and municipalities in every substantial town, we are seriously preparing for the slow devolution of local and provincial self government.

But the task of building up any substantial edifice of constitutional government in India is by no means easy, for all wide and uniform measures of reform are hindered by the immense area of the country and especially by the number and diversity of its population, and undoubtedly this is an operation of extraordinary difficulty, since we have no precedents to guide us in the experiment It must certainly be conducted within the limitations necessary to preserve undisturbed and indisputable the fabric of British sovereignty, which is to the political machine what the iron rails are to the locomotive, the foundation and permanent way upon which all progress must move Nevertheless some solution of this difficulty is demanded, for now that the English have accomplished the building up, after the high Roman fashion, of an immense polyglot empire, the stability of the structure must depend upon a skilful

distribution of weight, because excessive centralisation is radically insecure, and supports are useless without some capacity to resist pressure. The solution of these problems requires the sympathetic insight as well as the scientific methods of statesmanship, supplemented by the goodwill and the growing intelligence of the Indian people.

It was formerly anticipated too confidently that education would provide a sure antidote to the fallacies of inexperience and unreasonable impatience, in times of rapid social progress and economical change. But modern public instruction, when introduced suddenly, and strenuously promoted by the State, acts as a strong irritant on certain classes, and it can hardly fail to operate as a quick solvent upon the old order of a stationary society. Nevertheless intellectual emancipation, scientific and literary culture, better acquaintance with public affairs, and an enlarged understanding of the conditions of practical politics, may be expected to produce among the foremost advocates of constitutional reform views and proposals moderated by a clearer appreciation of inherent difficulties. The two countries, England and India, are at any rate associated in a community of moral and material interests that has already lasted, throughout most of the dominion, for several generations; that has exercised a powerful influence over the history of each people, in Europe and Asia, and must affect, to no small degree, their future destiny. It may be confidently affirmed that this alliance cannot now be impaired or interrupted without incalculable injury to both nations.



100°
105
110°
30
25
20°
15
10
95
100°
N
MINI
RATES
Mergui
Chieng Mai

INDEX

Afghanistan, 40; crisis in, 316; invasion of, by the English, 317; failure and evacuation, 319, position of, 342-345, 365, war with, 366, 371.
Agra, 139; besieged and captured by the English, 258.
Ahmed Shah, the Abdallee, seizes the Punjab, 64, 151; victory over the Marathas, 152, contest with the Sikhs, 209
Aix-la-Chapelle, peace of, 84.
Alexandria, emporium of the sea-borne trade, 6
Aliverdi Khan, deputy-governor of Behár, 128
Alompra, subjugation of Pegu, 305.
Amboyna, massacre at, 23, 31
America, discovery of 8, conclusion of peace in 1783, 213
—— North, rebellion against England, 192
Amherst, Lord, Governor-General, expedition against the Burmese, 308.
Amiens, peace of, 250
Amír Khan, 293, besieges Jeypore, 297 disbands his army, 299.
Aracan, annexation of, 308.
Argaon, Nagpore Rája defeated at, 258
Armenia, 344
Asaf Jáh, Nizám-ul-mulk, 78, death, 90
Asia, sea-borne trade with, 8; British Dominion in, 334.
Assam, kingdom of, 306; skirmishing on border, 307; Burmese recognise our protectorate, 308.
Assaye, battle of, 258.
Auckland, Lord, 316; treaty to reinstate Shah Soojah, ib.; territory of Amírs of Sinde brought under British control, 320
Aurangzeb, Emperor, accession of, 29, wars in South India, 44, compared with Louis XIV, 45, death, 62

Báber, Emperor, founds the Moghul Empire, 42, 126, memoirs, 125
Báji Rao, the Peshwa, 136, 151, 252, alliance with the English, ib, attacks British at Poona, 300, surrenders, ib
Barker, Sir R., 187.
Barlow, Sir G., Governor-General, 273.
Baroda, Gaekwar of, 360.
Bassein, treaty of, 252.
Beluchistan, 363.
Benares, insurrection, 197; acquired by the English, 207.
Bengal, 128, governors of, ib.; conquest of, 131; commerce and position, 139, state of affairs in, 141; disputes between the Company and the Nawáb, 142-147; revenue, 171; famine, 174; naval engagements in Bay of, 200; the centre of English power, 202.
Bentinck, Lord William, Governor-General, 309, makes English the official language of India, 310, puts an end to burning of widows, 312, his foreign policy, 313.
Bernier, François, on the Moghul Empire, 45, letter to Colbert, 126.

Bhotan, war with, 363.
Bhurtpore, fortress of, unsuccessful siege of, 260; taken by Lord Combermere, 309
Bombay ceded to England, 30, covenant with Rughonáth Rao, 190, expedition against Salsette and Bassein, *ib*, negotiations with the Marathas, 191
Boughton, Mr, 24
Braithwaite, Col, 199
Breda, treaty of, 36
Buonaparte, 232, *see* Napoleon
Burgoyne, surrender at Saratoga, 192
Burke, defends the East India Company, 177, attacks them, 214, charges against Hastings, 215
Burmah, the Kingdom of, 305 annexation of Lower, 326 333, annexation of Upper, 373
Burmese War, the first, 305, the second, 327
Bussy at Hyderabad, 94, quarrel with Lally, 111, captured 114, returns to India, 200
Buxar, battle of, 147

Cachár, Burmese inroads into, 307, recognizes our protectorate, 308.
Calcutta, attack upon the English at, 109, 129, transfer of the headquarters of the Company to, 138
Canning, Lord, Governor-General, 330, 359, 380.
Cape of Good Hope, doubling of the, 8, seized by the English, 282.
Carnatic, the, 78, war of succession in the, 91
Cavagnari, Sir Louis, 368
Chamberlain, Sir Neville, 367
Chartered Companies system of, 18–21, 66–73
Cheetoo, leader of the Pindári hordes, 294.
Child, Sir J, 49
Chilianwála, battle of, 325
Chinese Empire, 297, 347
Chunda Sahib, 92, murder of, 94
Clive, his defence of Arcot, 94, expedition to retake Calcutta, 109, 130; letter to Pitt, 113 *n.*; engagement at Plassey, 131; departure for England, 144; assumes the title of *Diwáni*, 147, 157; return to India, 156; alliance with Oudh, 157, 162; on the political situation, 159; obtains grant of the Five Sirkars, 166, leaves India, 169, death, 178
Combermere, Lord, takes the fortress of Bhurtpore, 309.
Conflans, M., letter to, 113 *n.*
Constantinople, centre of European commerce, 8
Coote, Sir Eyre, 196, 199.
Cornwallis, Lord, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief, 218, his settlement of the land revenue of Bengal, 219; league against Tippu, 222; results of his administration, 230; leaves India, 231, return to India, 265, his pacific principles, 269, death, 272
Coromandel coast, 74, settlements on the, 77.

D'Aché, withdraws to the Isle of France, 111
Dalhousie, Lord, Governor-General, 325, annexes Punjab, 326, his policy of annexation, 328 annexes Satára, Jhansi, and Nágpore, 328, Oudh, 330, 377
Danish East India Company extinguished, 73
Davenant, Sir Charles, Essay on the East India Trade, 51
David, Fort St, blockade of, 83
De la Haye occupies Trincomalee, 34
Delhi, 139, massacre at, 64; taken by Lake, 258
Dhuleep Singh, 322
Diwáni, the, 157
Dost Mohamed, receives mission from the British at Kábul, 315, hovers about northern provinces, 318; restored to power, 319
Doulat Rao Sindia, 240.

Dow, extract from his history of Hindusthán, 160
Duff, Grant, 'History of the Marathas,' 151.
Dufferin, Lord, 345, 370.
Dumas, Governor of Pondicherry, 74.
Dupleix, Governor-General of Pondicherry, 74, ambitious spirit, 79, disperses the Nawáb's army, 83, schemes of territorial extension, 85, 88, failure of his policy, 95, recalled to France, 96, reasons of his failure, 97, character, 100.
Dutch, position of the, in India, 55

'East Indies,' meaning of the term, 17
Ellenborough, Lord, Governor-General, 319, determines to retire from Afghanistan, 320, treaty with Sinde rulers, 321
Ellis, Mr, chief of the Patna factory, 146
Elphinstone, Mountstuart, on Dupleix, 98, envoy to Afghanistan, 278
England, complications of her foreign relations, 35, wars with Holland, *ib*; importance of her Eastern trade, 51, origin of her ascendancy in the East 54, 55 commercial and political rivalry with France, 61, 75, declaration of war, 80, period of contests for supremacy with the Native Indian Powers, 123, undisputed supremacy, 212, war with France, 234 naval superiority, 282; valuable conquests, *ib*, systematic policy, 263
English East India Company, first charter, 12, disputes with the Dutch, 15, 22, with the Portuguese, 21, at Surat 23 new Charter, 30, settlements, 33, three principal stations 38 assumes independent jurisdiction, 39; declares war against Aurangzeb, 41, policy of self-government, 48; rival Company, 57, union of the two, *ib*; advantages, 58; administration of the, *ib*; compared with the French system, 88, expedition to Tanjore, 90, war in the Carnatic, 91-96, peace, 96, necessity for State interference, 171, increase of annual expenses, 173, insolvency, 174, inquiries into affairs of, 215, dissolved, 330
Europe, conclusion of peace in 1783, 213
European politics, vicissitudes of, 33

Firozshah, battle of, 323.
Fox, his East India Bill, 215, rejected, 216
France, alliance of powers against, 35 46, commercial and political rivalry with England, 61, 75, interval of peace, 73, declaration of war, 79, abandonment of Dupleix's policy, 96, views and motives of the Ministers, 102-105, termination of the contest in India, 115, disastrous war-policy, 118, overtures to the Marathas, 192, last expedition to India, 200
French East India Company, 31, on the Coromandel Coast, 35, vicissitudes of the, 73, occupy Mauritius 74, administration of the, 76 compared with the English system, 88, war in the Carnatic, 91-96, peace, 96, finances, 115, insolvency of the, 118
Friedland, battle of, 274

Gawilghur, fort of, 258
Genoa, trade with the East, 8, diversion from, 10, 56
Ghazipur acquired by the English, 207
Gillespie, General, 296.
Godeheu M, supersedes Dupleix, 90.
Goojerat, Sikhs defeated at, 325
Gurkhas, the, 295, war with the English, 296, 304

Gwalior, fortress of, taken by Capt. Popham, 197.

Háfiz Rehmat Khan, the Rohilla Chief, 187.
Hamont, M. Tibulle, 116
Hardinge, Sir H., Governor-General, 321; preparations against the Sikhs, 323; occupies Lahore, 324.
Hastings, Marquis of (Lord Moira), Governor-General, 288; war with the Gúrkhas, 296; plan for the suppression of freebooting hordes, 299
Hastings, Warren, Governor-General, 184; transactions against the Rohillas, 187; seizes the French settlements, 193; expedition against the Marathas, *ib*; war with Hyder Ali, 194, terminates the war, 197; financial embarrassments, *ib.*; resignation, 200; career, 204; trial, 205, charges against, 216
Holkar, Jeswant Rao, attacked by the English, 259, dispersion of his troops, 260; defeated at Mehidpore, 300
Holland, Universal East India Company founded, 14, conquests in Asia, 17, commercial policy, 26, hostilities against the English, 29, 31–35, 201.
Hormuz, Island of, bombardment, 22
Hughes, Sir E, naval engagements, 199
Hyder Ali, 163, master of Mysore, 165, at Hyderabad, 166; war with the English, 167; vindictive spirit, 194; triple alliance, 195; ravages the Carnatic, 196, defeated at Porto Novo, 199; death, 200
Hyderabad, Bussy at, 94, weakness of, 228.

India, commerce in, early competition for, 6, civil war in, 29, 63; disorganization of native government, 39, 40, natural fortifications of, [illegible]; the new constitution, [illegible]; faults of the system, [illegible]; claims of the Council and Court, 181; English sovereignty established in, [illegible].
India, Central, condition of, 285–294; freebooting bands of, 297, political settlement of, 302.
—— Upper, distracted condition of, 148.

Kábul, occupied by the English, 317; insurrection at, 369.
Kandahar, occupied by the English, 317, 367, 368; evacuation of, 370
Karrak, island of, occupied by the English, 315.
Khiva, subjugated by Russia, 365.

Labourdonnais, besieges Madras, 82, thrown into the Bastille, 86.
Lahore, 139, 235; occupied by the English, 324.
Lake, General, 257, his successes in the north-west of India, 258.
Lally, Count, his instructions, 107, expedition to India, 109; lands at Pondicherry, 110; unpopularity, 111, besieges Madras, 112; defeat at Vandiwash, 113; retreats to Pondicherry, 114
Laswaree, battle of, 258.
Lawrence, Sir John, 358.
Lenoir, Governor of Pondicherry, 74
London Directors, letter from the, 164, 270.
Louis XIV, compared with Aurangzeb, 45
Louis XV, shortsighted policy of, 117
Lytton, Lord, 364, 366, 369.

Macaulay, argues in favour of English language in India, 310; antagonist of James Mill, 311.
Macnaghten, Sir William, attempts to raise a standing army for Shah Soojah, 318; delays evacuation of Kábul, 319.
Mackintosh, Sir James, [illegible]

Madras, headquarters of the English Company, 78, 103; taken by the French, 82, again besieged, 112; treaty with the Nizám, 166; war against Hyder Ali, 167; treaty, ib.
Mahan, Captain, 'Influence of Sea Power in History,' 199 n.
Mahdajee Sindia, his political aim, 223; sudden death, 225.
Mahé, taken by the English, 194.
Mahomed Ali, 92.
Maine, Sir Henry, 382
Maiwand, battle at, 370.
Manipur, taken by the Burmese, 307; recognizes our protectorate, 308, military revolt at, 360.
Marathas, the, in central India, 64, power of the, 136; invade the Punjab, 150, defeated at Pániput, 152, in the Carnatic, 167, increasing power, 184, tactics, 185, incursions into north-west India, 186, menace Rohilcund, 187, strength of their position, 188, overtures from the French, 192, wars with the English, 196, 257, 299; new system of war tactics, 225-227, invade Hyderabad, 234; internal contests, 251, submit to English supremacy, 300.
Marion, M., on French finance, 104.
Mauritius, island of, occupied by the French, 74.
Mayo, Lord, 366
Meeánee, battle of, 321
Meer Jáfir, invested with the Nawábship, 131
Meer Kásim, 146
Metcalfe, Sir C, letter from, 287
Mill, Colonel James, scheme for conquering Bengal, 126, 139
Mill, James, on the success of the English, 97
Minto, Lord, Governor-General, embassies from, 277
Moghul Empire, the, 42, disordered condition of, 46, increasing difficulties, 50; disruption of, 62-65, final disintegration, 208, extinction, 363
Moira, Lord; see Hastings, Marquis of.
Moodkee, battle of, 323.
Mornington, Lord; see Wellesley.
Mozuffur Jung, 92.
Multán, insurrection at, 325.
Munro, Major Hector, 147
Murshid Kúli Khan, Governor of Bengal, 128.
Mysore, partition of, 242; reconstitution of, 361.

Nádir Shah, 64, sacks Delhi, ib.; assassination, ib
Nagpore, 259, 300, 328.
Napier, Sir Charles, defeats Amírs of Sinde at Meeánee, 321
Napoleon, his scheme of Asiatic conquest, 233, 274, letter to Tippu, 236, embassy to Persia, 274, coalition with Russia, 276, 277, overthrow, 278, supremacy in Europe, 281.
Násir Jung, 91, murder of, 93.
Native armies, weakness of, 98, 132-135
Nawáb of the Carnatic, 82
Nepal War, 294-297
Nizám of Hyderabad surrenders at Kurdla, 234.
North, Lord, 174, 177, 178
Northbrook, Lord, 366.
Nott, General, holds Kandahar, 319.
Nujíb-ud-daulah, 151

Orme's History, 'The War in Coromandel,' 91
Ostend East India Company, suppression of the, 73.
Oudh, Vizier of, defeated at Buxar 147; alliance with the English, 156, 158, 162, treaty with the Rohillas, 187, unites with the English against Rohilcund, ib, cession of his frontier provinces, 249.
—— decline of the State of, 288; annexation of, 330; rebellion and pacification 377

Paniput, battle of, 152.
Panjdeh, 370
Paris, Peace of, 122.

Parliament, Committees of enquiry into the administration of the East India Company, 172, 176, 215, restraining Acts of, 230
Patna, massacre at, 146
Pegu, annexation of, 328.
Perron, M, at Delhi, 256
Persia, Shah of, overtures to Napoleon, 274, Treaty with England, 278, negotiations with, 314; attacks Herat, 315
Peshwa, 151, 154, 298, 332 (*See* Báji Rao)
Pindári hordes, the, 294
Pitt's India Act passed, 217
Plassey, the rout of, 132
Pollock, General, recaptures Kábul, 311
Pondicherry, 74, headquarters of the French Company, 78, 103, besieged by the English, 84, fall of, 115
Poona, headquarters of the Marathas, 198
Pope Alexander Borgia, his Bull, 9
Portugal, India awarded to, 9, commercial prosperity, 10, annexed to Spain, 11, cedes Bombay to England, 30
Punjab, wars in, 321–325, annexation of the, 326, 361

Rája of Nagpore, league with Sindia, 254, cessions to the English, 259
Rájput, States of, claim British protection, 287
Rangoon, British attack on, 307
Ranjít Singh, 155, ruler of the Punjab, 305, treaty with the English, 309, 316, death, 321
Roberts, General, 367, 366
Roe, Sir T, embassy to the Emperor Jehángir, 24
Rohilcund, annexed to Oudh, 188
Rohilla War, 187–189
Rughonáth Rao, 151, seizes Delhi, *ib*
Rumbold, Sir T, 195
Russia, influence over Persia, 314, influence in Afghanistan, 345, 364.
Ryswick, peace of, 37.

Salsette, 189.
Sambaji, 40, execution of, 41.
Sandeman, Major, 364.
Satára, 293, 328
Sepoys, mutiny of the, 331.
Shah Álam, Emperor, 166, 186; state pensioner, 263
—— Soojah, the Afghan King, 278, exile in the Punjab, 314; reinstated, 317
Sher Ali, 366, 369.
Sher Singh, murder of, 322
Shore, Sir J (Lord Teignmouth), Governor-General, 234; refuses to assist the Nizám, *ib*.
Sikhs, the, 161, rapid rise of the, 208, power and position, 209, internal anarchy, 322, collisions with the English, 323, renewed hostilities, 324, overthrown at Goojerat, 325
Sinde Amírs, territory of, brought under British control, 320, fall of the dynasty, 321
Sindia, chief of the Maratha federation, 196, occupies Agra and Delhi 212, destruction of his armies, 256–258, cessions to the English, 259
Sivaji, invades the Carnatic, 39, death, 40.
Spain, commerce with Asia, 10, claims monopoly of trade, 13, negotiations with Holland, 14
Spanish insurrection of 1808, 278.
Stewart, Sir Donald, 368
Subsidiary treaties, system of, 245
Suffren, Admiral, 121, naval engagements, 199, sails for Europe, 200.
Suraj-ud daulah, Nawáb of Bengal, 128, attacks Calcutta, 109, 129, routed at Plassey, 110, 131
Surat, chief establishment of the English East India Company, 24
Sylhet, Burmese claim British district of, 307.

Tanjore, 90
Temple, Sir W, negotiator of the Triple Alliance, 36.

Tenasserim provinces, annexation of, 308.
Thomas, George, 238
Tippu of Mysore, 200, embassies from, 221, attacks Travancore, 222, first war with the English, 223; alliance with the French, 236, 239, besieged in Seringapatam, 242, death, *ib*, character, 243
Trafalgar, battle of, 281
Trichinopoly, siege of, 93
Trincomalee, occupied by the French, 34, 202
Turcomantchai, treaty of, 313

Umbeyla campaign 362
United States, declaration of independence, 192
Utrecht, peace of, 38

Vandewash, battle of, 113.
Venice, trade with the East, 8, diversion from, 10, 58
Verelst, on the commerce of Bengal, 139; succeeds Lord Clive, 170
Versailles, Peace of, 122
Victoria, Queen, 357, Proclamation by, 358, 380, assumes title of Empress, 387

Watson, Admiral, 129.
Wellesley, Lord, Governor-General, lands at Madras, 239, treaty with the Nizám, 241, conquest of Mysore, 242, system of subsidiary treaties, 246, policy towards the Marathas, 251, offers to resign, 255, preparations for war 256, victories, 258 his policy, 260, result of his rule, 264
Wellesley, Arthur, 242, Maratha campaigns, 257

Zemán Shah, 210, occupies Lahore, 235

Oxford Horace Hart, Printer to the University